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THE WAY OF JESUS

THE WAY OF JESUS

A FRANK ENQUIRY INTO THE WAY OF JESUS FOR HUMAN SOCIETY, BASED ON THE RECORDS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

BY

HENRY T. HODGKIN

M.A., M.B. (CANTAB.)

AUTHOR OF "LAY RELIGION," "THE CHRISTIAN REVOLUTION," "CHINA IN THE FAMILY OF NATIONS," ETC.

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PREFACE

THESE Bible studies were first written for Chinese students following the conference of the World's Student Christian Federation in Peking. At that gathering a series of findings were brought in by the "Forum" on social and industrial problems.* These were based upon the idea that the teachings of Jesus were the practical guide for our present social disorders. It was felt that as they were discussed in the colleges of China, it would be a great help to have, at the same time, a body of material that would show in greater detail what these teachings are and how they affect our problems to-day. In the original draft there were many references to Chinese conditions.

The studies have been worked over and in part rewritten for British students. In some particulars the Chinese flavour may be found still to remain. Yet it is believed that there is nothing in them which does not bear upon problems faced by England at the present time. The line taken is similar to that I have followed in my recent volume *The Christian Revolution*, the main differences being the form of question and daily study, the perpetual reference of all to the actual words of Christ, and the absence in this volume of the illustrative material published in the second part of *The Christian Revolution*. I hope that in this form the leading conceptions on which that volume is based may not so much be transmitted to the student as won by him for himself. The inexhaustible mine which we have in the words and deeds of Jesus Christ is still open for us

* See Appendix, p. 134

to dig in for ourselves. As life unfolds its meaning and as one problem follows another, one comes back with ever fresh wonder and satisfaction to the wealth of wisdom and inspiration to be found in these writings. I hope that each student of these pages may be a discoverer, with something of the zest of the pioneer breaking fresh ground, seeing fresh beauties, enriched with fresh power for his own life as day follows day. Whether he sees just what I have seen is small matter. That his own eyes may be enlightened and his own spirit uplifted is my great hope.

In the matter of recording results, each person and group must take the line which seems best. The suggestions are simply thrown out for the sake of those who find such a method helpful. The idea of daily readings and a weekly group study has often been found helpful, but there is no reason why this book should not be used either by an individual studying these matters alone or by a group whose members do not follow the method suggested. In that case the group should take each study and not only those arranged for the weekly gathering. Many problems are raised which are not fully answered. I have often indicated the kind of answer I should make with my own knowledge and experience, but the object of the book would not be achieved were students to follow this lead without thinking their own way into each question. For this reason the lead has often been very slight.

HENRY T. HODGKIN.

SHANGHAI.
March 31, 1923.

INTRODUCTION

EVERYONE is talking of reconstruction to-day. We can agree at once that profound changes are needed in society, and that we need courage and insight if we are to make them. We can agree about many of the things that are wrong; it is much harder to agree upon what we need to put in their place and how we are to proceed in doing this. There are many prophets of a new social order. For some, Karl Marx or Lenin offer the true solution; for others, H. G. Wells or Romain Rolland; for others, Ghandi. Who is to lead us in the task of creating a new social order? This is a very important problem for all students to-day. If only a number of us could agree on a leader and agree to follow him, what an immense power the forces of goodwill and good sense would have, and how easy it would be to overcome reaction and selfishness and dishonesty in high places.

This book is first and foremost an enquiry into the problem as to whether Jesus Christ gives us the kind of guidance we need. It is offered to the sincere and fair-minded student in order that he may reach his own answer to that question. We shall ask ourselves what the ideas of Jesus actually are and what they would mean if they were applied in society. We shall further ask in what way they can actually be worked out. At the end of this study the careful student should be in a position to answer the questions, "Is Jesus Christ the Leader we need in the world to-day?" "If so, in what sense is He to be our Leader?"

There are some people who will begin at once with certain difficulties. Let me say a word in trying to remove these:

1. " Christian countries are as bad as any others, if not worse. There is no use in looking to Christianity for a solution."

I would reply, " There is no really Christian country. Undoubtedly Christian influences have deeply affected the lives of certain countries and have been instrumental in leading to social betterment, but in some degree we have all missed the way of Jesus Christ. This book is not to compare West and East, ' Christian ' and ' non-Christian;' it is to bring us all back to the simple standards of Jesus Christ, and apply these standards fearlessly to West as to East alike. There is no doubt they will mean a tremendous change everywhere, whether we call that change good or bad."

2. " I do not believe Jesus is what the Church says, ' the Son of God.' Why, then, should I pay any special attention to His will."

I would reply, " This book is not based on any such assumption. We simply look at the life and teaching of Jesus as we would look at that of any other creative thinker. Some of us, after so doing, may come to the conclusion that He is indeed the Son of God. If so, we shall have to consider what this involves and be true to our convictions. But we do not start out with any such assumption, instead simply taking the historical materials, and trying to find if they throw any light on our present problems."

3. " These historical materials are of no value. The Bible is full of mistakes and is not trustworthy. Why should I accept its authority ?"

I would reply, " I am not asking you to accept any authority save what you yourself feel to be true. Here are the records: if they have value, as many wise people have thought and still think, any reasonable and fair-minded student can see their value after studying them. Let us try this method, without discussing historical or scientific accuracy of particular incidents. That can

come later. Now we are seeing what they have to say, taken simply as ordinary human documents."

4. "But Jesus lived in entirely different economic conditions. How can His life have any meaning or relevance to our problems?"

I would reply, "Principles are eternal: let us see what these are and how they may be applied to new circumstances. At least we can't afford to lose any light on a problem so difficult."

5. "Why study Jesus and not other great men, ancient or modern, who have thought on these things?"

I would reply, "By all means let us study them too. If there had been space I should have illustrated my points freely from the other writings which have very much to teach us on these matters. But to study one person's work at a time may be enough, and there is this interesting fact about Jesus. He is an international figure and has appealed to men of all races and in each generation. What we need to-day is an international solution of our economic and social problems."

The student who takes pains to follow through the thought of this volume will certainly be rewarded. He is not studying simply the ideas of the writer, which may be good, bad, or indifferent. He will be studying the thought and acts of one whom every serious student of history agrees to have been one of the most suggestive and influential minds the world has ever seen. To do this is a liberal education. It needs humility, for without this no advance in thought or science can ever be made; it needs patience if we are to get to the real heart of the problem—no deep truths can be found by those who only scratch the surface; it needs honesty of purpose, for a man who will not accept in his own life the results of his own discoveries will soon cease to discover fresh things. I do not think anyone ever thought or acted in a more daring way than Jesus. Wherever people come under the spell of His personality they think and act boldly.

I feel certain that some of you who study Him in this little volume will find that all the best part of you is stirred to new life and action, that you want to serve your day and generation more than ever before, that you are ready to suffer more gladly, that you see a larger hope for the world and that a new power takes possession of you and makes you ten times as strong.

It is in this hope that I give you my little book, and for this reason I ask you to give your best thought to its study.

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THE WAY OF JESUS

FIRST WEEK

THE STANDARD OF JESUS CHRIST

First Day.

But Jesus called them *to him*, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: and whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many. (Mark x. 42-45.)

So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for *so* I am. If I then, *your* Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. (John xiii. 12-15.)

The standards of Jesus are thoroughly revolutionary. We commonly think that it is a fine thing to gain authority, to command men, to have many who will serve us. This idea runs through the whole of civilization. Rarely, indeed, do men seek out a place of humble or menial service. Do you know any case of a man who could control many other lives, either by his power, rank, or wealth, voluntarily giving up all this to take the place of a servant? If we saw this happening on a large scale, we should think something had gone wrong with the world. For example, how does this conception of life affect our idea of the "white man's burden"? Is it clear that the moral qualities, such as a high sense of

justice, responsibility and public honour, which go to make an efficient government, are the most important qualities for *human society?* We may say that the maxim "By love serve one another" could be carried out by all persons, and if so carried out we should have an ideal state of society. But the maxim "By love (even) govern one another" could not be carried out save by a minority of the race. Jesus was dealing in terms of universal value, and exhibited virtues which, if exhibited by all, would mean a new social order.

Let us stop and ask ourselves whether we can imagine a society in which the competition would be for the humblest place, and there would be no scramble for the important ones. Yet this is the kind of society Jesus thought about. Where would it lead us if even a small number of us took this view of life?

Second Day.

Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at law, and take away thy coat, let him have *thy* cloke also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away. Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more *than others?* do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect. (Matt. v. 38-48.)

There is something rather disconcerting about these ideas of Jesus. Fancy encouraging the man who takes

your coat by giving him your cloak as well! This is no way to establish justice, it is simply letting the villain have his way. Society would fall to pieces if we didn't punish the offender, would it not? Did Jesus really mean that a man who was guilty of a dastardly assault should be asked to repeat the offence?

Suppose we all took this line, would it not simply mean that ill will would triumph, and that the kindly decent people would be stamped out, imposed upon, treated cruelly? We say that the eternal laws of justice demand that men should suffer for their crimes, that when a man has done wrong he deserves to have the same thing happen to him. Jesus seemed to think that God did not care very much for that kind of justice, for He made the sun to shine and sent His rain on the evil and good alike. (*Cf. Christian Justice*, by Norman Robinson).

What is the meaning of this strange contradiction? What kind of justice is established by law courts, prisons and other restrictive methods? Is this the kind of justice in which Jesus was interested, and if not, wherein is the essential difference? Let us think of the usual figure of justice—blind, with scales and a sword. What do each of these symbols mean, and do they stand for the conception of justice which is expressed in to-day's passage? Can we see or weigh the motive, and will force create just persons?

Third Day.

At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in

me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and *that* he were drowned in the depth of the sea. (Matt. xviii. 1-6.)

Human society as organized to-day seems to be based upon the importance of wise people and those who have reached positions of influence. Jesus seemed curiously indifferent to such ideas. The little children seemed to be the creators of a new world: "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." If anything happened to them, if they were despised or neglected or caused to miss the way, that was the great disaster to society. Those who are guilty of these things—no matter how rich or powerful—had better not have been born.

Surely if we follow the ideas of Jesus it means turning the world topsy-turvy. Do you think Jesus really meant us to take such teaching seriously? Compare His own attitude when the important disciples came to send away the children. No doubt they thought Jesus far too busy to attend to such trifles. But we read:

And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them: and *his* disciples rebuked those that brought *them*. But when Jesus saw *it*, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And he took them up in his arms, put *his* hands upon them, and blessed them.

It certainly looks as if He carried out His own ideas. What, then, is to become of the great people who are too important to bother with little children? Of course, we say the affairs of the world are too complex and need wise people. But have the wise people been very successful in running the world? Is there room among even grown-up folks for those who still have the child-spirit?

Fourth Day.

And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? *there is* none good but one, *that is*, God. Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother. And he answered and said unto him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth. Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me. And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions. And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved? And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men *it is* impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible. (Mark x. 17-27.)

Everyone seems to be struggling for money. We can get so much with our wealth—ease, culture, self-development, power, honour, opportunities even to help others. Jesus seemed very little impressed with all these gains. He Himself never sought wealth (*cf.* Matt. viii. 20). To Him there was something not only which money could never buy, but which money actually prevented men from getting—what was it? Can you think of anything which rich men very seldom have, but which the poor often have? After all, what are the real human values? It may be that we miss the best things in life because we have our eyes so set on the second-best things that we never take time to work at the best.

Can you imagine a society in which men were not constantly struggling for money? Try to think out what

it would mean. How many of the wars and struggles in society of one kind and another can be traced back to the idea that money is a chief good if not the chief good! How many laws are based upon the idea that things are of more value than men! Would there not be a surprising revolution if any considerable number of persons took *this* idea seriously?

It might be well to put down some of the most noble things that have been done in history and some of the big advances made even in material things and still more in things of the spirit, and then ask the question as to how far the money motive seems to have been responsible for such advance.

Fifth Day.

And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, What is written in the law? How readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live. But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour? And Jesus answering said, A certain *man* went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded *him*, and departed, leaving *him* half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked *on him*, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion *on him*, and went to *him*, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee. Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise. (Luke x. 25-37.)

If ever there was a case of strong race prejudice it was between Jews and Samaritans. Although the latter lived in a stretch of country in the heart of Palestine the Jews would have no dealings with them. Many went a long detour in order to avoid passing through the country. Yet Jesus took a Samaritan in order to illustrate to His Jewish hearers what real brotherliness meant. Can you imagine anything that more clearly shows His desire to break down race prejudice?

We commonly think it quite right and natural to feel a certain dislike or disdain towards those of some other races. Perhaps one nation has suffered at the hands of another. Do you think Jesus would regard that as a sufficient reason to withold pity and loving service? The world is full of barriers of this kind that keep men apart in separate groups—because I belong to one group I have no dealings with those in another. My "neighbours," according to this idea, are those in my own group. Those outside have little if any claim on me. Is this way of thinking right? Is it according to the standard of Jesus? How would our actions and how would society and the world of nations be changed if we could catch a new idea of what loving one's neighbour really means? Dare we face the consequence? For example, what would this mean in regard to such questions as reparations, economic blockade, the colour bar, etc?

Sixth Day.

Then came together unto him the Pharisees, and certain of the scribes, which came from Jerusalem. And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled, that is to say, with unwashen hands, they found fault. For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash *their* hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders. And *when they come* from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, *as* the washing of cups, and pots, brasen vessels, and of tables. Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to

the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands? He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with *their* lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, *as* the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death: But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, *It is* Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; *he shall be free.* And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother; Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye. (Mark vii. 1-13.)

One tradition after another seems to disappear under the steady searchlight of Jesus' teaching. The religious tradition is no exception. Religion has always had much to do with holding society together. The taboos of the animist or the caste system of India or the ancestor worship of China are all examples. The traditional religion of the Jews was a great social bond, and it still holds together the Jews though they have had no country of their own for nearly 2,000 years. A religion that rests on a mere outward observance has no place in the thought of Jesus. Social obligation is a thousand times more important than this kind of service to God. Actually, says Jesus, by observing this outward rule and offering to God a part of your property, you are denying Him, if it means neglecting your duty to your parents.

How easy it is to make religious observance an excuse for neglecting a social duty. No amount of temple-worship or church-going or outward rites can excuse a man from that which he owes to his parents, his family, the whole community in which he lives. Many people think of the religion of Jesus as a mere doctrine. Does not this passage show that it is first of all a way of life involving social responsibility? Can you think of other

traditions that have the sanction of age and even of religion, which prevent men from fulfilling social duties? Think what it meant for Jesus to face the whole organized religion of His time. In what respects might we have to face it if we allowed His social ideas to possess us?

Seventh Day.

Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting. And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men: and they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again. And they were exceeding sorry. And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute *money* came to Peter, and said, Doth not your master pay tribute? He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers? Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free. (Matt. xvii. 21-26.)

Jesus never made the mistake of thinking His programme could be carried out without cost. He called men to suffer even as He Himself was prepared to suffer. He seemed to think that suffering was in some way glorious if the end were worthy. Men say, "We must live somehow"; so they excuse their compromises and their unwillingness to take any great risks. Jesus never said anything of this kind. We have seen that He did not regard influence, riches, power, etc., as important ends; but is it not amazing that even life itself seemed to be a small end compared with something else?

What was this "something else"? Can we see the end which made all this pain and isolation worth while? Society without any adequate aim is lost indeed. We are working desperately hard, but for what end? The extraordinary statements of Jesus seem to need an explanation, and no explanation will do that does not include an answer to this question: What is the aim of human

life and human society? When men feared that following Him would mean destitution, Jesus replied, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God" (Luke xii. 31). In the light of our present knowledge, can we see what the Kingdom must have included and what it certainly did not include?

GENERAL NOTES

We seem to be right up against a real problem. If the way of Jesus were actually to be taken, society as we know it would simply fall to pieces. It would not be so much revolution as collapse. The very things men work for are apparently not desirable—wealth and all that it brings, power, influence, ease and even "justice." An honest attempt to understand Jesus and to take His sayings at their face value seems to lead to hopeless confusion. Is that a reason why so few people do take Him seriously? Are we not afraid of the consequences, not only for our own unimportant lives, but for society as a whole? This is one side of the picture, and it would be plain folly not to look at it fairly.

On the other hand, the ideas of Jesus make a certain appeal to all of us. Let us try to get out of this week's study a concrete picture of what would be the main elements of a society in which people did take Jesus seriously. Men would work in order to serve and help their fellows; when injured they would forgive again and again and would never retaliate; they would care intensely to make life beautiful and happy for little children and for all people; they would not scramble for wealth if it meant losing fellowship with their brothers; they would get rid of the wretched barriers that divide men into mutually exclusive groups; they would shake off the traditions of merely formal religion and find how they could worship God in serving the community. They would gladly accept personal loss if it would mean gain to the world.

There is something about such a dream that makes us almost afraid. We feel it can't be realizable. We know other people and ourselves too well. We scarcely dare to dream of a reconstructed world on such a basis as this. But whether we regard it as hopeless or not, is it not worth while to apply this standard to society as we know it? Might it not be a good test by which to judge our schemes for reconstruction? At least no harm can come of making the attempt, and when we see where it carries us, we might again ask ourselves whether it is really such a hopeless dream, and whether Jesus did not supply some clue as to the way in which it might be realized.

The group who have been through the daily study might attempt to sum up their thoughts by putting down in black and white the main principles which emerge from this week's study. Let us try at this stage to avoid the discussion of practicability, and ask first what exactly Jesus did mean by the teaching we have reviewed and whether we do or do not regard these ideas as *desirable*. If the group can make a record of its conclusions in answer to this problem it will be of service for record and comparison as they proceed. We are like a man that sees that a table is not rightly constructed and wants to know exactly how to get it right. He needs a T-square or a pattern by which to compare it, so that he may not actually make things worse in his attempt to make them better.

Any standard for society should be—

(*a*) *International*, so that similar ideas can be applied in all lands, making a complete interrelated world society.

(*b*) *Intelligible*, so that even the simple-minded can understand the principles and see what they mean and how they can be put into practice in life.

(*c*) *Practicable*—at least to the point of being demonstrated as possible within the terms of human experience in this world.

Do the standards of Jesus fulfil these conditions? This question is asked now as one that demands an answer before we are through with our study. At this stage it may be well to record our first impressions and leave a detailed answer till we have proceeded further. We shall come back to the question again. We need not be surprised if we cannot at once find an answer to all the questions raised in this week's study. Would Jesus be worth studying if all He had said yielded an immediate and simple return to our first thought? The amazing thing about these words and incidents is that they always come back to one with fresh meaning and a deepening challenge. None of us have fully proved their depths, yet the child with pure heart can see far into them. What a lot of dynamite there is in the teachings of this man: and very much of it is still unexploded. It carries us farther than Bolshevism. There is no good thinking we can limit the application of the principles of Jesus to those things which are convenient to ourselves. This can only be done by refusing to think clearly or by definitely running away fron the consequence of our thinking. It will be well for us to pray, if prayer has any meaning for us, that we may be given courage to face the full meaning of the principles we have considered this week, and that we may not get into the serious position of those who see the light but are unwilling to follow it.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Try briefly to sum up the outstanding principle that emerges from each day's study.

2. Consider whether there are any other principles which can be discovered in the life of Christ that bear on the same questions.

3. Do these principles commend themselves to you as safe guides in judging the present social order or in constructing a new one, or if not, why not?

4. How far do the principles of Jesus meet the three conditions stated in the general notes? Are there any other similar conditions to be added? If the principles of Jesus do not fulfil the conditions, let us state wherein they fail, and make suggestions as to any other set of principles which seem to be more satisfactory.

It may be well for the group to prepare a record of its answers to those questions for comparison with the results of future study. At the end of the course all results should be reviewed, and we should see if they will stand the test of future light and thought. Such as are now recorded should be regarded as tentative conclusions only.

SECOND WEEK

PREVAILING STANDARDS IN THE PRESENT SOCIAL ORDER

First Day.

There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: and there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died and was buried; and in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. (Luke xvi. 19-25.)

The first thing that strikes us in considering our present social order is the manifest inequalities of wealth. Jesus clearly recognized this, as He seems to suggest in the above passage a world in which there is some redressing of the balance. Most people accept these inequalities as inevitable. They do not seem to regard the condition as remediable. Do you think we must accept this condition? If not, why not? Some will argue that even if we were to have a complete redistribution of wealth and perfect equality we should very soon have again the present differences, because men are no different and would still be wanting to get the better of one another. Is this so? Let us consider how far poverty hinders a man's true development, the

loss that comes from overcrowding, bad sanitation, overwork, child labour, lack of education, uncertainty of employment, etc. Is it according to the standard of Jesus that these things should be perpetuated? Which of the principles we have discovered are denied by these conditions? Granted that wealth and even life itself are not the chief aims of human existence, can those of us who are better off be content to see very many of our brothers and sisters losing so much that we have? The attempt to answer such questions leads us very quickly to another problem. What is the Christian attitude towards private property? To this we must return later. To-day we may simply record our first answer to the questions.

Second Day.

Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth! In mine ears said the Lord of hosts, Of a truth many houses shall be desolate, even great and fair, without inhabitant. Yea, ten acres of vineyard shall yield one bath—the seed of an homer shall yield an ephah. Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflame them! And the harp, and the viol, the tabret, and pipe, and wine, are in their feasts: but they regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hands. (Isa. v. 8-12.)

The deep injustice of this ill-distribution of wealth lies in the power which property gives to some people to control the lives of others. We must distinguish between property for use—that which we wear and eat, etc., ourselves and use in our service to the community—and property for power, that which makes us able to say what other people shall do. The power which the owner or owners of a factory have is of such a kind, as also the power of a landowner who can turn out his tenants. It is this accumulation of wealth far beyond our personal needs that leads to social unrest. Even if the despot is kindly and uses his power for the good of his subjects

we feel that the system which gives one man so much power is bad, and if the power passes to the hands of a bad man, it is very hard to control him. So it is with the capitalist system.

The passage we have read shows how in very ancient times this evil prevailed and resulted in destitution for some and riotous living for others, ending in complete forgetfulness of their higher life. In fact, it may be questioned which is really in the worse case, the evicted poor or the debauched rich.

The capitalist system is not to be identified with the ownership of private property. It is the system whereby the tools that many people use are possessed by a few, and in particular by those who do not themselves use them or have the sense of responsibility towards the user. Thus men become mere "hands," "machines" instead of persons. What principles are denied by this system? Can it be altered so as to conform to the standard of Jesus, or should it be abolished? (*Cf.* Professor Hobhouse in *Property*.)

Third Day.

And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed *be ye* poor: for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed *are ye* that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. Blessed *are ye* that weep now: for ye shall laugh. Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you *from their company*, and shall reproach *you*, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward *is* great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets. But woe unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation. Woe unto you that are full! for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep. Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets. (Luke vi. 20-26.)

We closed yesterday with a very difficult question, although some, no doubt, would answer it without hesi-

tation. We must examine further the real nature of the capitalist system. Exploitation is the term used for any action in which some men or races are used by others without regard to the former's own welfare, or with only a secondary attention to it. When one race assumes that it has the right to employ the people of another race as slaves or in forced labour, when a woman is used to give a man pleasure with no regard to her rights as a woman, when children are put under conditions which we should regard as utterly wrong for our own children—then we see exploitation. There is no doubt that all these and other forms of exploitation are constantly manifested in connection with capitalism and encouraged by the underlying assumptions of the system. But are they necessarily a part of it? If they are, what answer must we give to yesterday's question?

Let us try to state briefly why we think exploitation is immoral, and see what relation such statement would have to the principles we find in the life and teaching of Jesus. Is a society based on exploitation likely to endure? The words with which we opened the day's study suggest a total upsetting of the social order, the fortunate becoming the unfortunate and vice versa. Why did Jesus foresee such a complete change? Do you think He saw that the foundations were wrong? Compare the closing words of the same chapter.

Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like: he is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock. But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great (Luke vi. 47-49).

Fourth Day.

And Levi made him a great feast in his own house: and there was a great company of publicans and of others that sat down with them. But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners? And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. (Luke v. 29-32.)

And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat. And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that *Jesus* sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, and stood at his feet behind *him* weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe *them* with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed *them* with the ointment. Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw *it*, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman *this is* that toucheth him: for she is a sinner. (Luke vii. 36-39.)

The fact that some men are richer than others, that some control the lives of others and even exploit them for private gain is a chief cause of another great social evil—the wide gulf between class and class. In the highly industrialized countries this is most manifest. But in the time of Christ there was such a separation as the day's readings show. With the accumulation of capital in the hands of the few and the growth of credit and the capitalist system, the gulf has become greatly widened and deepened. What was the attitude of Jesus to it, as expressed in these and other passages? What would be His attitude to-day? Do we approve of this attitude? Fundamentally there can be no solution short of a uniting of the interests of all men in seeking a common end. So long as two men or two classes or two nations both want the same thing, or as much as they can secure of the same thing, regardless of the interests of others—just so long there must be wars and strikes and disputes

of all kinds. These signs of unrest speak of a deeper disease in our social structure. What is that disease? In the two incidents before us we see people judging others as inferior morally or socially. This type of judgment is very common still as between races or nations or classes. The moral condemnation and the social aloofness are very often so closely associated as to be almost identified. Does this throw any light on the nature of the deeper disease? Consider the loss to *ourselves* of such aloofness or contempt. We miss not only the richness of a wider human fellowship, but also the revelation of God in other types of persons or in other classes. Would it be true to the thought of Jesus to say, "Inasmuch as ye respect or respect not one of these least ye respect or respect not Me"?

Fifth Day.

Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all (1 Cor. xii. 4-6.)

If the whole body *were* an eye, where *were* the hearing? If the whole *were* hearing, where *were* the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where *were* the body? But now *are they* many members, yet but one body. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary. (1 Cor. xii. 17-22.)

Another element in the present social order that is frequently criticized is competition. Does this conflict in any way with the standard of Jesus as we have studied it? Many feel that no human society can be carried on without an element of competition. We can at once recognize its value in stimulating men to their best efforts, in improving and increasing output and so forth. Nevertheless we see very often how competition is carried on in a way which crushes the weak and inflicts

terrible hardships on persons who, for no fault of their own, are less efficient than others. The competitive system develops rivalry, trickery, false advertising, production for profit rather than for use, slipshod work in some cases and even national disputes and wars. Is there any place for competition in the Christian ideal of society? If so, under what conditions and limitations? If not, what can be put in its place to stimulate industry? Behind the method of competition is the motive of personal gain or class interest.

Suppose co-operation to take the place of competition: might it not lead simply to the exploitation of the consumer by the combined producers? How could this be avoided?

In the passage for the day we get a glimpse of a society in which each member has a function to perform, and all recognize its value and support him in fulfilling it. Would such a "functional" society be nearer to the Christian standard than the present "acquisitive" one, based on personal profit? (*Cf.* R. H. Tawney, *The Acquisitive Society.*)

Sixth Day.

And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem. And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him. And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem. And when his disciples James and John saw *this*, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save *them*. And they went to another village. (Luke ix. 51-56.)

We have seen how the evils we have discussed lead to estrangement, and so to conflicts between peoples. When a dispute arises it is commonly assumed that in the last resort we must fight it out. But the result of

such a reasoning is the philosophy of force, militarism, the conviction that physical force is really the strongest power in society. In the light of Jesus' teaching, can we assume this to be the case? There seems some reason, at any rate, to challenge the assumption.

Is not fear one of the chief reasons that men are against one another? Jesus was constantly telling men not to be afraid, even of those who kill the body. When people offended Him He would not use force to destroy them. Had He a secret that was greater than that of the militarist? Did He accept the view that the "struggle for existence" was inevitable? (*Cf.* chap. i. in *By an Unknown Disciple.*)

We must consider later whether there may be some use for coercion in human society. At this stage we can, perhaps, assume that there are many things coercion cannot do, and that a tendency to rely upon this method in the settlement of disputes is to be deprecated. But can we put anything in its place? If we once admit that there are cases where nothing else can be used, how can we be saved from all the evils of militarism? The problem for to-day seems to be whether militarism can be so controlled and altered as to become the expression of the Christ-spirit, or must it be totally abolished?

Seventh Day.

And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on. The life is more than meat, and the body *is more* than raiment. Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls? And which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit? If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest? Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If then God so clothe the grass, which is to day in the field, and to morrow is cast into the oven; how much more *will*

he clothe you, O ye of little faith? And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you. Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. (Luke xii. 22-34.)

Down deep at the heart of our trouble to-day is the lack of any adequate purpose in life. Unless a man knows where he is going, how can he direct his steps? Unless society moves towards some recognized goal, how can it do other than blunder? Let us ask ourselves what is the goal for ourselves and for society? Some seek pleasure, some wealth, some knowledge, some honour, some power. When we think of human history we talk of progress. But progress towards what? Material prosperity? Power over nature? Self-government of peoples? Can we find any end which all can seek together, and which if all were to seek there would be no danger of exploitation or conflicts? (*Cf.* "Progress," in *Outspoken Essays*, by Dean Inge, 2nd series.)

In the passage we have read Jesus assumes that men commonly seek not so much great wealth and power as the bare necessities of life. He dares to suggest that even these things should not be the main object of our search. If we seek this other thing which He calls "the Kingdom of God," He says all these other things will be given us.

If this be true, what a simple solution for all our ills! It is surely worth while, then, to ask what is this Kingdom of God? This we shall do in more detail next week. To-day let us chiefly consider what aims society and we ourselves are following and wherein they are at variance with the standard of Jesus.

GENERAL NOTES ON SECOND WEEK

We have made a very hurried review of some of the evils of our present social order. We have not attempted to estimate its better side. But we may stop at the close of the week to recognize this. In our economic system the needs of millions of people are actually supplied, the world's work on the whole gets done. The fact that people are not committing suicide on a gigantic scale shows that for the vast majority, life, on the balance, is a good thing. There is a very great deal of happiness in the world in spite of ill-distribution of wealth and all these other terrible ills. There is a lot of mutual trust expressed in business transactions, a lot of real co-operation, interchange between different countries, good-will and good fellowship. Really to change our system may well be to jump " out of the frying-pan into the fire."

Nevertheless there are real evils. Compared with the picture of Christ's imagining, the world seems a pretty poor place for many people to live in. We have seen how the vast differences in wealth lead to the lives of many being in economic bondage to the few, how these few can exploit their brothers to the great loss of both and to the break-up of human society into antagonistic groups. We have seen how competition leads to war and this to further hatred and distrust.

Amid all this criticism let us stop first of all to ask ourselves very seriously why we should criticize at all. Criticism implies a certain standard of criticism whether it be recognized or not. What is that standard and where does it come from. In Japan the other day I asked a labour leader why there were labour troubles in Japan and a demand for better conditions. He replied that there could be no question about it. The criticism sprang from a new idea of human values. I asked him where it came from, and he replied that it was not to be found in ancient Japan and could only be traced to

Christian teaching. Again and again we find that unconsciously the standards of Jesus are being applied in criticizing the social order. If we do not use these, what others can we put in their place? It is because something in each of us bears witness to the absolute value of this standard that it is so generally used, even by those who do not acknowledge the source.

In these studies we are confessedly trying out the effect of applying the standard of Jesus. Many who apply it in certain instances are unwilling to apply it in others where, it may be, it touches their self-interest. But if we apply it at all, we should be honest enough both to acknowledge the source and to apply it thoroughly. In the previous week's work we saw how very revolutionary the principles of Jesus are. In this week's work we have simply seen a few places where our present system cannot stand the test of such principles. Let us try to summarize these and others which may occur to us. The particular evil referred to in each study (or any other we may fix on) should be stated in a word or two, and then over against it we could place the principle of Jesus which it contravenes.

In our discussion we want to get to close grips with the problem of how far the present system involves essentially a denial of Christ's way, and how far it may be possible so to modify it as to make it consistent with His teaching. Let us consider this in regard to the holding of private property, exploitation, capitalism, competition, militarism, in each case trying to substantiate our position with quoting some saying or act of Jesus.

Let us come back to the last study. This problem of purpose is related to each of the preceding days. For example, if there is to be any reconciliation between classes there must be a common purpose which will actually bring them together in a conviction that all want the same thing. If the main purpose of industry were no

longer profit, high wages, or even securing for oneself the necessities of life, but actually the service of the community, would not this unite all engaged in it? It would be seen that the community could not be served if the workers were starving, discontented, ill-housed, overworked and so on. Thus all would strive to improve the conditions in order that the best work might be done for the community. Is not this an illustration of the working out of the law "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and all these things shall be added unto you"? Apply this thought to each of the questions raised in the daily study, and the key will be found to fit the lock.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. In what particulars does the present social order differ from the picture that Christ drew of a true human society?

2. Let each day's study be reviewed, and see how far the category of ills covers our social disorders. Then, taking them one by one, let us put down the chief evil referred to and the reason why that evil is condemned by the standard of Christ.

3. Let us try to find out if there is any agreement as to whether the Christian social ideal can be expressed in and through the present order (after it had been deeply modified, let us say), or whether so great a change is needed that we shall have to change the system altogether.

4. The group should record any agreement on the above questions, even if only in a tentative way—*e.g.*:

Can the capitalistic system be so altered as to express the Christian spirit?

Can competition be used in a Christian social order?

Can coercion be used, and, if so, under what limitation?

THIRD WEEK

FREEDOM AND FELLOWSHIP

First Day.

Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, *then* are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free? Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: *but* the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. (John viii. 31-36.)

We must now consider in greater detail the kind of society which Jesus tried to set up. We may take as our guiding thought the words the *Kingdom of God*. But in using this phrase we must remember that the King is our Father and that therefore the Kingdom is in point of fact a *family*. The distinctive character of the family will be derived from the nature of the Father. His nature should appear also in the sons and daughters. The main characteristic of God, as Jesus saw it, was love, which explains and conditions all other attributes. We shall return to this thought repeatedly in these three weeks.

To-day we begin with the idea of freedom. Any true family must aim at the true freedom of each child. What is the reason that freedom is so generally regarded as a desirable end? Is it really an end in itself? Is freedom desirable if it be used only for selfish ends?

These questions take us right back to the problem of human personality. In the passage for this day we see first that Jesus believed in freedom, second that this free-

dom must come through truth, thirdly that there is something in man's own nature which limits his true freedom. What is that? Do we know this in ourselves? We want to be free to develop not our baser instincts, to gamble and drink and become vicious, but free to be what we know we were meant to be. How can we be free in this sense?

Second Day.

Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. (Gal. v. 1.)

For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only *use* not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, *even* in this; thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. *This* I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. (Gal. v. 13-16.)

Yesterday we got some glimpse of the thought that freedom is not a matter of conditions merely, but of inward attitude. A man may be politically and economically free and yet the slave of an evil habit. Can a good society be created out of such persons? This consideration does not mean that political and economic freedom are unimportant, but simply that we must begin at a deeper point in our search for freedom and that we must not be deceived by thinking that changed outward conditions can really create free men.

> "They are slaves who dare not be
> In the right with two or three."

Nations need freedom from economic bondage and from galling political restrictions due to foreign powers. But does recent history show that the peoples who strive for or achieve such freedom know what freedom really is and can use it? When a new State is formed or an old one re-created do we not often find that the people use

this fresh power not to set others free, but to impose their own ideas upon others? How few leaders are so free from the desire for personal gain that they can really work first and foremost for the good of their country and be trusted with high office! The struggle for freedom should mean not simply struggling for the right to do as I like, but for the right for others to do as they feel right, even if it be not my idea of what is best for them. How can we think of freedom in such a way that it will not be mere anarchy, each doing what is right in his own eyes? Re-read the passage with which we started and see if it supplies an answer.

Third Day.

And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt. Salt *is* good: but if the salt have lost his saltness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another. (Mark ix. 43-50.)

This passage may seem at first a very difficult one. It seems to mean that the cost of real freedom may be disablement. There are many things which we cannot do if we are to be free. To enter into the Kingdom of God (*i.e.*, to be one of God's family, sharing his Spirit) is sometimes a costly thing. To gain the freedom of the family we may have to surrender part of what seems to constitute our freedom.

This difficulty can only be explained when we face the

question from the point of view of the whole of society. The purely individualistic view of life will never carry us very far. We cannot escape the fact that we are in a society, members one of another, and if one suffer all suffer with it. No idea of freedom which cannot be worked out for each member of the family consistently, so that all have the same measure of freedom, will be a final one. We must learn to think and act in a universal way—that is to say, in such a way that if everyone else did the same we should have a true family. This may mean very serious curtailment of individual liberty, but it will not be curtailed by outward laws and restrictions but by an inward spirit. What is that spirit? How can we express the kind of restraint that is consistent with true freedom?

Let us note that in this passage Jesus does not say a man's hand must be cut off by someone else, but that he must do it himself. Do you know any impulse which could ever make you do such a thing?

Fourth Day.

For *the kingdom of heaven is* as a man travelling into a far country, *who* called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey. Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made *them* other five talents. And likewise he that *had received* two, he also gained other two. But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money. After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them. And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more. His lord said unto him, Well done, *thou* good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them. His lord said unto him, Well done, good and

faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: and I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, *there* thou hast *that is* thine. His lord answered and said unto him, *Thou* wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and *then* at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. Take therefore the talent from him, and give *it* unto him which hath ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (Matt. xxv. 14-30.)

We come back to the thought of the family. The members of a true family will always feel a sense of mutual responsibility. If one has more he will want to share with the others. His gain will not be a private one, his gifts will not be used for himself alone. There is an end in view—the good of all the family—and even if that good is thought of as material welfare it will affect his actions favourably and make him less selfish.

In the story we have read to-day we see the judgment of Jesus on one who did not make use of his gifts. He may have said to himself, "I am free to use this talent or not as I like." Such freedom is a danger to society. By not using that talent he incurred his Lord's anger. He was missing the great opportunity of his life.

Fellowship, the sense of interrelation, interdependence, is the bond of the family. Think out how this will affect ideas of freedom that are current in the world to-day. We may ask ourselves how fellowship within a family affects the freedom of each child, how fellowship in a small community affects the liberty of each family; how fellowship in a country affects the liberty of cities or of provinces, how world-fellowship affects the liberty or sovereign

rights of any one nation. These are problems that carry us very far, and we shall not solve them all at once, but we can come back to the question: Am I using my freedom in a way that is consistent with the larger fellowship?

Fifth Day.

I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh: who are Israelites; to whom *pertaineth* the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose *are* the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ *came*, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen. (Rom. ix. 1-5.)

We have used the term fellowship rather easily. Jesus had a very deep sense of His unity with all men. So deeply did it possess Him that He suffered and died for them. This fellowship is not a mere matter of words. See how it moved Paul, who had certainly caught the idea from Jesus. It made him almost willing to be cursed himself for his brethren's sake. John Woolman, a very wonderful man, who followed Christ very closely, saw a vision of men in "as great suffering as it was possible for them to be in and live," and he felt that thereafter he could no longer consider himself as a distinct and separate human being. The same thought has been put into these words:

> "My heart is made the pavement of the city street;
> Oh! the long sorrow of the passing feet."

The experience by which we feel that we are so deeply joined with others that their sorrows and joys are ours, that when they are in pain we too are in pain, is a very deep one. If many people had this experience, what would be the effect upon their ideas of freedom?

David Livingstone saw the slaves in Africa, and felt

their loss of liberty as if it were his own—he gave up his home and the opportunities of self-development and walked many months through African jungles till he died, in order to set them free. His own freedom was a talent which he spent in order to give them freedom. Do you think you know anything of the secret of such a life? Can you see where he got the incentive which made him care less for his own freedom than for that of black people he had never even seen? Does such a life seem to you to be an example of true freedom?

Sixth Day.

So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith unto him again the second time, Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep. Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry *thee* whither thou wouldest not. This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me. (John xxi. 15-19.)

We come now to an even more difficult point. Paul, who had certainly caught the idea of Jesus, calls himself again and again "a slave" of Jesus Christ. The person who cared so much for freedom calls people to follow Him at whatever cost, to give up all that for most people makes life happy, to surrender their freedom and become His slaves. Is not this quite inconsistent with any idea of "liberty" we may have?

The answer is to be found in two directions. In the

first place, there is all the difference in the world between having our freedom taken from us and freely surrendering it. In the incident we have read Jesus tells Peter that he will lose his freedom in the new life he is entering and even meet his death. To what does He appeal? Before suggesting any such thing He had assured Himself of a certain attitude on the part of Peter. Is there anything in this inconsistent with Peter's freedom?

In the second place, the service is to one whose only interest is the good of the whole family. Therefore this bondage means the full acceptance of all that membership in the family implies. We cannot be really free in isolation. Sooner or later any freedom that does not regard others ends in unspeakable bondage. Perfect freedom is the full acceptance of all that is involved in being members of one family. Do you think Paul used that phrase, "a slave of Jesus Christ," with regret or in triumph? Can you understand the meaning of the phrase which says that God's "service is perfect freedom"? Try to express in words any idea of freedom which is different from this, and which could prevail in all the world as a basis for a new social order.

Seventh Day.

For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of *himself* more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: so we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. (Rom. xii. 3-5.)

Let us come back to the central idea of the family. In the family the object of all must be the fullest development of each child so that he may be happy and healthful, that his talents may be used and all his powers set free. This end must, however, be sought consistently with the good of each other child. If there is a limited income it must

be so used as to give each child a fair proportion. If the demands of one child are for a way of living that is inconsistent with the welfare of all the others he must be brought to see that this is so, and so gladly give up his private interests. This is a totally different thing from compelling him to do so by law, putting him in prison if he refuses, or in the last resort taking his life. If the other members of the family have the right spirit they will bear with him and surround him with such a different spirit that he will come to take his place and seek his freedom in a way that will not curtail that of others.

Now it is quite clear that this type of life is much harder to achieve than a law-ordered society in which each person is kept in his place by a rule he can only disobey at his peril. To this thought we return next week. To-day let us ask ourselves whether we have this family spirit and are prepared to accept the risks of living as a member of a family, *even when some with whom we must live have not got this spirit?* Is it due to a sense of self-importance that we insist on our own freedom regardless of that of others? Do we really think it is more necessary that we should be free to develop as we wish than that the child in the factory should be free to do so? If we began to think differently, what would it mean for that child and for ourselves?

GENERAL NOTES

In this and the two following weeks we are trying to get a clearer idea of what is involved in the thought of the Kingdom of God. It will be well still to concentrate attention on the actual meaning of this conception rather than on the very interesting question as to whether it is practicable, and so how we may actually try to realize it in this world. The study of these questions will come later. But we may here remark that it is clear that Jesus did believe His ideal to be realizable, because He was far

too wise a person to spend time in discussion of a mere dream that had no relation to fact.

The group will do well to compare notes on the various ideas of freedom which they have or which are afloat in the world to-day. Freedom is commonly used in a political sense as implying for the individual power to vote and exercise his influence as a citizen, to speak his mind, to carry on his own life without galling and needless restrictions and so forth. Yet even this idea of freedom implies some limitations. We are not free, for example, to drive a motor on the wrong side of the road or at an unreasonable pace. Why not? Is that any real infringement of liberty? In many countries there are factory laws which prevent men from employing children under certain ages, from having machinery unprotected, from paying sweated wages. These curtail the liberty of certain persons. Are they an unjustifiable restriction of liberty, and if not, why not? What about prohibition of alcohol or of such a drug as morphia?

In the case of a free country we speak of sovereign rights and assume often that a country can do whatever it likes. But is there no feeling that one nation should be restricted in the exploitation of another?

Suppose an effective League of Nations were to pass laws which prevented such exploitation; would you consider this an infringement of liberty? Is there, in fact, any limiting principle in the matter of political freedom which the good sense of men will agree to accept or which we feel they ought to accept?

Economically, a man may be said to be free if he has the power to choose his own way of living and is not so controlled by another that his acts may at any time mean that he faces destitution. But the more closely we examine into economic facts the more we realize how necessary it is that all should observe certain principles of action. We are so closely connected with one another that if one man chooses to be lazy or to do hard work

it reacts on the whole community. Is it a good thing that certain people are so economically free that they have no sense of responsibility for the world's work? They live on unearned increment due to the labour of others. It makes them free, but what about the people who labour for their good?

We come then to the thought of spiritual freedom. If men can only have freedom in this deeper sense, will not all be well in the end? But such freedom may be a menace to others. What about the man who uses his freedom not only to lead an immoral life himself but to drag others down into the same kind of life? Should a man be free to do such a thing? Should he be free to organize his friends into a group of bandits and threaten the lives and property of others? How far is this virtually what is being done by certain capitalist groups, and can they be restrained consistently with any true principle of freedom? Many a man uses his freedom not only to his own great loss but to that of others. Can a man be said to be truly free if he is an opium smoker and cannot break off the habit? Can we reach any definition of freedom which makes it an end to be pursued *at all costs?*

Perhaps we had better ask rather what our freedom is for and why it has value. The value we attach to freedom is derived from the conviction that the individual has value. A man should be free to develop his personality because that personality has some worth. But the worth of personality has meaning—has it not?—only because of the possibilities in that personality, and we know that in each man there are possibilities which are diametrically opposed to one another. There is the possibility of a man giving way to passion, becoming cruel, mean, greedy, selfish, impure; and there is also a possibility of his becoming kind, honest, self-denying, pure. Is it not because of the better possibility that we can speak of human worth? The latter type of person is the type which could be indefinitely multiplied with advantage to society. Of

the lower type the more we have the more difficult does society become. Therefore we unconsciously apply what may be called a social standard to individual life. Our very ideas of personal worth are grounded in social conceptions. Freedom must have a social and not a purely individual meaning.

Thus we see the importance of relating these two conceptions of freedom and fellowship, if we are to speak of freedom as an object of social endeavour. This connection is strongly made in the teaching of Jesus. No teacher more clearly taught the value of each man, woman and child, and therefore the need of freedom for self-development. Yet no teacher saw more clearly the need for a sense of social obligation. What this social obligation involved in the case of Jesus and some of His followers we have seen in our study this week. Let us take time to get this thought clear and to see what it means as a basis for a true human family.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What did Christ mean by freedom ?
2. Is this idea of freedom the one which is current in the world to-day, and if not, in what particulars do the two ideas differ from one another ?
3. Is this idea of freedom what the nations need to-day, and if not, in what particulars should it be corrected ?
4. Can we safely talk of freedom and work for freedom, without also seeking to promote a deeper idea of fellowship and the obligations due to society from each member ?
5. What do we mean by fellowship, and how can we actually promote this fellowship ?

After this study it may be well to reconsider our ideas of individualism and socialism, the relation of the individual to society and society to the individual.

FOURTH WEEK

JUSTICE AND LOVE

First Day.

Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach *them*, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven. (Matt. v. 17-20.)

Wherever men think seriously on social questions they agree that justice is one of the main foundations of any true social order. The social order in which Jesus lived was one based on an ancient law that was very exacting. In order that this law might not be broken, even in inadvertence, the religious teachers and moralists of the time insisted on the observance of numberless small points of behaviour, thus fencing round the law with restrictions that covered every department of life. It was enough to drive anyone to despair to think of all these little rules. It seemed simply impossible to keep them all.

In the passage we read to-day Jesus appears to sanction this elaborate moral code. He even tells His followers that their righteousness must exceed that of these religious fanatics. Such a demand might well cause anyone to turn away from Him. Fancy asking anyone to be more particular than these people of whom we read in another place that they " bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne and lay them on men's shoulders " (Matt. xxiii. 4).

How could Jesus ask His followers to go one better than that? Three points may be noted in answer to this difficulty. First of all, we may say that these men were hypocrites, demanding a righteousness they did not live up to. Secondly, we may note that their righteousness is an external affair. Jesus thought of something that was internal and affected the motives and not merely the acts. In the third place, their idea of justice was something to be established through law: Jesus tried to establish it through love. This vital distinction must engage our attention this week.

After reading this passage can we say that Jesus was indifferent to justice? In the family that He sought to establish (the Kingdom of God) is there any place for injustice? Does true love regard justice as an unimportant matter, overlooking, for example, the wrong done by a loved one, but punishing one whom we do not love?

Second Day.

Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: but I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. (Matt. v. 21-24.)

We look to-day a little more closely at one of the points raised yesterday. The law against murder is a very excellent one for any human society. It is an illustration of the kind of way in which the community protects itself against the irresponsible and anti-social acts of the individual. Such acts, we say, must be prevented, and the criminal must be punished, in order to maintain law and order, show others that the law cannot be broken

without a penalty, prevent the individual from doing the same again and, if possible, perhaps, help him to do better.

Is this line of reasoning consistent with the family idea? For the State the matter of chief concern is that the law has been broken; for the family the real trouble is that one member has not got the family spirit. Therefore the end before the State is not the same as that of the family. If the State has to kill the offender it will do so, perhaps with regret, but without hesitation. What did the chief priest mean when he said of Jesus, "It is expedient that one man should die for the people"? Can a father say this about one of his sons?

The father, moreover, is less troubled by the wrong act than by the wrong spirit. Whether a crime is committed or not may be an accident. Two men brought up in different ways will express hatred, one by cutting and bitter words, the other by knocking his enemy down. Which is worse from the point of view of the State, and which from the point of view of Jesus? After all the State can only judge by the result in acts, the father must always try to read behind the act into the heart of his child. The same act committed by two children may mean very different things. One tells a lie to shield a brother, another in order to bring his brother into trouble. Is there no moral difference? Looked at in this way justice is not so easy a question as it sometimes appears.

Third Day.

Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren

only, what do ye more *than others ?* do not even the publicans so ? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect. (Matt. v. 43-48.)

It has become clear that Jesus thought justice (or righteousness) was a very important element in true human character and therefore one of the foundations of the social order. It is also clear that He demanded a deeper idea of justice than anything which held the field in His day. Justice involves a standard by which to judge. In the State that standard is a code of laws. In the family it is the character of the father. The children are to show the same character, and if they fail to do so they fall short. So, in the thought of Jesus, we fail in so far as we come short of " the glory of God," fail to reproduce His character.

In to-day's passage we got the call of Christ that we be perfect—*i.e.*, like our Father—and He defines God as one who is uniformly kind to good and bad alike. We are to have this character and therefore to love our enemies and not only our friends, to show the family spirit to those who are outside the family. This is being like God and therefore showing true justice in ourselves, and, further, it is so acting as to create true justice in others. Often it may mean not restraining them, and even, as we have already seen, seeming to encourage them. But the question is, Will it be the means of overcoming in them the evil will ? Which is of greater social value, to root out anger and replace it by love or to prevent a murder ? And which is the more difficult ? Is there any other basis for a true human society than *just persons?* Justice is not an abstract quality: it must be embodied in men and women. Is there any way by which such just persons can be created ? That is the great social problem.

Fourth Day.

And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, they say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in

the very act. Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with *his* finger wrote on the ground, *as though he heard them not*. So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him cast first a stone at her. And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. And they which heard *it*, being convicted by *their own* conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, *even* unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more. (John viii. 3-11.)

We have seen that Jesus' idea of righteousness is adjustment to the standard that we see in our Father. In this very remarkable incident we have an illustration of how that thought can be applied. First consider the Pharisees. They come full of the sense of the woman's sin and of their own righteousness. The one factor they have not taken into account is the character of Jesus. Face to face with Him they discover the meaning of righteousness as something far bigger than they even dreamed. They are self-condemned, and one by one they go out without condemning the woman. Next consider the woman. She has all the shame of having been discovered in sin. To her amazement no one condemns her—not even Jesus, who had the right to do so. She condemns herself, and rises up surely with a new desire to be worthy of so great a trust. Can we doubt that she went out a new woman?

Now, from the legal point of view here is a miscarriage of justice. A crime goes unpunished. There seems to be no sense of its awfulness and the danger to society of letting such things go on. But the incident has produced a new sense of shame in some people, leading, it may be, to some effort at reform, and in the chief sinner it creates out of an anti-social person one who will try to express

purity in her own life and so become a pillar for a true human society.

What has produced the effect? Could a method of punishment have done half as much from the point of view of the end in view? Has justice really been sacrificed? Do we see that what looks like condoning wrong may be the revelation of the most effective way of overcoming it?

Fifth Day.

Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but *rather* give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance *is* mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. (Rom. xii. 19-21.)

Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven. (Matt. xviii. 21, 22.)

Many people will agree that we should try our utmost to establish justice through love, but will argue that there are many cases where this method breaks down and we must use severer measures. This raises some very difficult problems. Looking at nature it seems clear that those who break the laws of health (let us say) suffer in their bodies. Do we not also see that those who break the laws of the mind suffer mentally? We live in a universe which reacts against the breach of law, and we assume this universe to be the work of God. (*Cf. The Lord of Thought*, by Miss Dougal and C. W. Emmett).

Can we argue from this that there are cases where we have to use coercion in maintaining outward justice? To answer this from the point of view of Jesus seems to require a clear conception of the nature of the motive behind any measure of coercion. To many it is only possible to think of any condemnation of wrong as expressing itself in some form of coercion. But given the

condemnation, can we not express our judgment in the supreme effort of goodwill which may overcome evil? This may involve a measure of coercion, but coercion with a redemptive purpose is a totally different thing from coercion merely to stop a wrong being done or to vindicate the law or to secure retribution for wrong committed to ourselves or to society.

The problem is, How can we awaken the conscience so that a man sees for himself that he is wrong and begins to want to do right? So far from limiting the extent to which love can be applied we seem to need an inexhaustible supply, forgiving till seventy times seven. Dare we try this method? In our own case, if we have done wrong, which appeals to us more, to see the pain we cause others and that they bear no resentment and still seek our good, or to have them retaliate and to give as good as they get? If the end be to change the person, will prison or pardon have more hope of securing it? Is the mother or the policeman more effective in transforming evil into good?

Sixth Day.

When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spake. Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake. He then lying on Jesus' breast saith unto him, Lord, who is it? Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped *it*. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave *it* to Judas Iscariot, *the son* of Simon. And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly. Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him. For some *of them* thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy *those things* that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor. He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night. (John xiii. 21-30.)

Can this way of establishing justice in the world always succeed? This question must arise and cannot be evaded. In the relation of Jesus with Judas we have an example of the supreme attempt to try this method. Judas was a thief and took the money entrusted to him. Jesus went on trusting him with the money. He plotted to destroy the life of his best friend: Jesus still took him into His inner councils and abated nothing of His friendship. Right up to the very last Jesus tried to win Judas by love and trust. "And the result was failure! Judas betrayed Him and showed himself unworthy of the love and trust." Yet it may be that even this judgment must be modified. When Judas saw the full result of his crime he was utterly overcome with shame and remorse. He went out and hanged himself. He even gave back the reward he had earned. At least we may say there was no need for society to step in and punish the criminal; he saved them that trouble; though curiously enough in this case the State would not have regarded him as a criminal!

But there is more to be said. Judas was met by perfect love. The apparently abandoned man was allowed to do his worst; being met thus he did in the end at least realize the terrible nature of his crime. Could the punitive methods of the State have effected this result? Prisons usually confirm men in crime and make them feel that every man's hand is against them. Judas discovered that one man's hand was not against him and *that* the very hand which had most right to be. Men have real freedom. They can resist love. But how many would if we really tried this way? To prevent Judas doing his deed was a far smaller and easier thing than to make him see what it meant. Dare we try this way with people far more easily reached than Judas? Could a Christian nation try this method with the Turk?

Seventh Day.

And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left. Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots. And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided *him*, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God. And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar, and saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself. And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS. (Luke xxiii. 33-38.)

Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man. And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts, and returned. (Luke xxiii. 47, 48.)

Jesus, as we have seen, was not simply a theorist. He put into practice His idea of justice. To do this cost Him His life. He knew well that this would be the result. On several occasions He told His followers what would happen. A terrible injustice was committed which illustrates the failure of State systems to secure real justice. Nevertheless, in thus dying Jesus did something which has done more to establish righteousness in the world than any amount of laws. To the very last He made an appeal to something *in men* that recognizes truth and goodness wherever they are seen.

In the story of the Cross we may note (1) that Jesus died along with two others: He was identified with them in their suffering, even though they were guilty and He was guiltless; (2) that His love to men never wavered, even when they nailed Him to the Cross; (3) that even in dying He created in some a new idea of what true righteousness is and thus of their own failure. Note the expression, "Certainly this was a righteous man." Thus we see that He was meeting evil at the only place where it can be met and overcome—that is, in the heart of the person who

does the evil. An impersonal idea of justice is absurd and unreal. Justice is a quality of persons and can only be established in and through persons. This is the essentially family idea of justice.

Think how much harm is done to the cause of justice in the world by those who condemn others and make a great parade of the principles of justice, but all the while act unjustly themselves. The idea that such professions can further the cause of justice arises from a totally false idea of what justice is. Can we now see what this false idea consists in, and how deep is the difference between it and the justice created through love? Let us close this day's study with thinking out the meaning of the death of Christ in relation to the problem of righteousness. It would be well to try to put down some of our thoughts on this far-reaching question. (*Cf. Reconciliation and Reality*, by W. F. Halliday).

GENERAL NOTES

We saw last week that while freedom is certainly one of the foundations for a true social order we need a new definition of freedom in order to use the term safely. This week we have discovered that we must find a new definition of justice if we are to use that term safely.

The old idea of justice, still very prevalent, is largely external. It consists in comparison with a certain set of regulations, any departure from which constitutes a crime to be duly punished. It is roughly expressed by the doctrine of " an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." The figure of justice used in the West is a blind woman with a pair of scales and a sword. This figure exactly typifies what many regard as justice. She is blind in order not to be prejudiced against or in favour of the person judged. She weighs the deeds of men in a balance. She strikes the offender with the sword. This is justice through law.

Paul saw that Jesus came to supersede the reign of law and introduce the rule of spirit. He says that the whole of the law is fulfilled in this one word, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." This abrogation of outward law can only come as a new inward law—the law or principle of love—is put in its place. Justice thus becomes a figure of one who sees, looking with sympathy and pity on the wrongdoer and always ready to discover something better than the law can see. It is of the essence of this justice that it pierces behind the outward act and reads the inner motive. Its scale of values is not outward; it is relation to the character of a person, to the nature of God. No balancing of acts can avail to establish this justice; it can only come as men see *for themselves* where they are wrong and deliberately, freely choose the right. Not the fear of the unsheathed sword, but the love of right for its own sake is the motive that makes men just in this way.

We shall thus get an idea of right which is not content merely with doing our duty. We have something more to render which love prompts. Duty may compel us to walk one mile: love sends us out rejoicing upon the second mile, eager to do all we can to help the loved one. The mother who loves her child finds delight in doing for it far more than the nurse, who only works for money, even though the latter does her duty perfectly.

Jesus would not be content with a society that rested simply on this external idea of justice. To be always discussing our rights is often to get into quite the wrong spirit. There is an idea of justice that leads always to the law courts. The idea of Jesus leads to the happy family circle. It may involve gladly giving up our rights and suffering the consequences of trusting too much or loving too largely. But such a spirit does more than "maintain" justice, it creates justice. Its eyes are not on the past, with all the mistakes and the wrongs that have been committed and must be paid for in some coins of suffering

or shame. Its eyes are upon the future, which may yet be made what the past was meant to be. Therefore its key-word is not retribution but forgiveness. The freely forgiven child is the one who can hope to arrive at true manhood. The child who lives in constant fear of punishment will have little hope.

A false idea of the State is largely responsible for the false idea of justice. Jesus challenges this idea. The State has its place as a sphere for personal self-realization and as the co-ordinating factor in many human activities. But it is not an end in itself, and its laws are not of higher value than the interests, the true eternal welfare, of each citizen. It is not the ultimate human society, and it only represents the association of men in certain activities. Can we not try to get our ideas of justice free from this State idea ?

The group meeting should concern itself with a free exchange of views on the meaning of justice, on the relation of justice and love, on Christ's life as an illustration of one way of establishing justice. Must we consider justice and love as opposites ? When Shakespeare says:

> " Earthly power doth then show likest God's
> When mercy seasons justice,"

is he right in putting mercy and justice in opposition ? Can we not see that there is a deep difference between the justice of the father who loves his child passionately, caring always to see him do right, believing in his better nature and always trying to call it out, and the justice of the judge concerned mainly with interpreting a law and seeing that no one can accuse him of partiality ? After all, is it ever true that a crime has the same moral significance when committed by two persons ? When a slum child starving and ill-trained steals a loaf of bread he desperately needs to share it with his brothers and sisters, is it more or less blameworthy than an educated and prosperous man stealing it for a joke ? Which is

worse in the eyes of the law? If the group can come face to face in this way with the concrete failure of many of our methods of justice, we may be the better able to estimate the value of the contribution of Jesus to this problem.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Can we define justice in relation to the idea of law and in relation to human personality?
2. Was Jesus indifferent to justice?
3. Can justice be established by external laws, punishments and coercion, and, if not, how can it be established?
4. Is it true to say "the only true justice is the justice of love"?
5. Consider very carefully the significance of the Cross in relation to the creating of justice in the world, and record any impressions that may be contributed or shared by members of the group.

FIFTH WEEK

AMBITION AND SERVICE

First Day.

And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, come unto him, saying, Master, we would that thou shouldst do for us whatsoever we shall desire. And he said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you? They said unto him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory. But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized: but to sit on my right hand and on my left hand is not mine to give; but *it shall be given to them* for whom it is prepared. (Mark x. 35-40.)

Ambition is one of the great motives in society. Men want to excel, to do better than others, to reach positions of honour and ease. A man without any ambition is a poor spiritless thing. There can be no progress and scarcely any real excellence in human affairs without ambition. It is that spark in man's nature which ever stirs him to be up and doing, to press forward, to be discontented with anything that is imperfect.

Nevertheless, ambition leads to competition, and competition to warfare and bitterness of spirit. We ask the question, "Can we get on at all without ambition?" only to be driven further to ask, "Can we get on happily with it?" To many the struggle for existence, and even the struggle for a comfortable existence, seems an essential element in human society. If we eliminate this, do

we not eliminate something which gives life its joy and zest? In fact, can we eliminate it at all?

The story we have read to-day is full of meaning. Two ambitious young men come to Jesus. The very fact that they were in His company, and had indeed forsaken their means of livelihood to join Him, shows that their ambition was not purely personal. Jesus first lets them see the tremendous difficulties that lie ahead, and then actually tells them they must suffer these hardships, but that they cannot be assured of the reward. It is like exacting a price for a treasured article and when the price is paid refusing to give the article. It seems actually dishonest. Is this all that Jesus does with ambition: to use it as a means of calling out the best efforts of his followers, and then deny them the fruit of their labour? Is there any deeper meaning in this? What is the place for personal ambition in society? (*Cf. By an Unknown Disciple*, chap. xiv.)

Second Day.

But Jesus called them *to him*, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: and whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many. (Mark x. 42-45.)

Yesterday we closed with the problem of the way Jesus used ambition. Perhaps the answer to our question may be found by an analogy. A boy goes to his teacher and says, "I want to win that prize." The teacher says, "Are you able to get up early every day to work long hours, to deny yourself enjoyments which others are having?" and the student says, "I am able." What can the teacher do? He cannot even then promise the prize. There may be a cleverer boy competing who will take it

from him. He may fall sick when the examination is held. Are there not many cases in life when we pay the price but do not get the thing we want? Can you think of other similar situations?

What, then, is the true answer? Surely it is more important that the student gain the knowledge than that he gain the prize. So the creation of true character is more important than the rewards which come to good men. All can gain character, few gain great rewards. All can be worthy of high trust, not many may be put in such positions.

If, then, ambition can be directed not so much to the outward success as to the inward achievement, will it not become a great social asset? Instead of leading to competition and strife, it may lead to the development of each man towards his own highest life.

In to-day's passage we have the sequel to yesterday's. The object of ambition is to be—what? If we are to be worthy, for what shall we strive to be worthy? for commanding others, places of high rank and big salary? or for serving well, for being given what people call the menial positions?

Jesus seems to say, "I welcome your ambition. God gave it you. It will help you to overcome the immense difficulties that lie ahead. But harness it to no personal end. Let it make you fit for the highest place in My kingdom—that of the servant."

Third Day.

And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest. And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye *shall* not *be* so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. For whether *is* greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? *is* not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth. Ye are they which have continued with me in my

temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. (Luke xxii. 24-30.)

One of the things that must constantly impress us as we study the life and teaching of Jesus is its extraordinary modernity. Many passages might have been written under the influence of ideas which we are pleased to think of as the very latest. Modern democratic ideas turn increasingly from the old ideas of authority. The man who is supposed to belong to a different order of being, whom his subjects or slaves call "benefactor," with servile hypocrisy, is now quite out of date. What we need is one who is appointed by his fellow-men because he is prepared to serve them in a disinterested way. The leader of a trade union or the president of a republic is not in essence a kind of superman set up to control the lives of others. He is the arch-servant.

It is in this sense that Christ offers Himself to men. He seems to think in terms of a free society, and He is among them as a servant. The qualification for authority (judging the tribes) is simply that His followers have learned that service is the chief thing and that they can only become great by serving.

Is this not exactly the idea of leadership needed in the world of to-day? Is there any hope of creating a new society unless we have such leaders? How can we get them? It was not to a man pushing his way to the front in politics that America turned in her sorest need. It was to one who was serving faithfully in his own small world, Abraham Lincoln.

Fourth Day.

For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man *that is* an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard. And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And he went

out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, and said unto them; Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way. Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise. And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, *that* shall ye receive. So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward Call the labourers, and give them *their* hire, beginning from the last unto the first. And when they came that *were hired* about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny. And when they had received *it*, they murmured against the goodman of the house, saying, These last have wrought *but* one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day. But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny? Take *that* thine *is*, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good? So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen. (Matt. xx. 1-16.)

Let us turn to another aspect of life—the economic world. How are we to get the best work out of men? Is it possible unless personal ambition comes into play? We see industry organized for profit. A great many things are made which are not absolutely needed. Many people cannot obtain the bare necessities of life. Why? Because industry is developed where it pays and not at all necessarily in relation to actual need. If people need clothes but cannot pay for them, we say in economic terms there is no "demand" and so there will be no "supply."

Again, where men work chiefly for personal profit there can always be said to be a latent antagonism between different groups. This is most evident as between capitalist and worker in a particular industry where the profits are regarded as a pool from which each wishes

to draw all he can. Thus we get strikes and all the other manifestations of the "class-war." These divisions are the very antithesis of the family spirit. Can they possibly be overcome so long as men work for gain, so long as personal ambition is the ruling motive?

But suppose the substitution of another kind of ambition. Once let people work in order to produce what the community needs, and without the idea of making as much as possible for themselves, and we should strike at the very root of these social disorders and divisions. A contingent question at once arises: How are men to be paid? Ought it to be according to the amount they produce or the market value of their work or according to their need? This question seems to have been faced by Jesus, who, in the story we have read to-day, announces the revolutionary idea that payment shall be according to need and not according to amount of work. Is this a sound idea for our economic structure? (*Cf. Unto this Last*, by Ruskin.)

Fifth Day.

And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left *their* nets, and followed him. And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James *the son* of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them. And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him. (Matt. iv. 18-22.)

The objection that arises again and again to the position which Jesus seems to have taken may be stated thus: "Of course it would be a much better social order if men would act in this way, but they simply do not and will not. You cannot get the best work out of the average man unless you drive him to it by hope of reward or fear of loss." Many people seem to think that fear of

economic disaster is the only thing that keeps the majority at work and that people are so incurably lazy that if they were, for example, paid as we saw in the last chapter they would not work at all.

Now it is an undoubted fact that the best work the world has ever seen has not been done for personal and still less for sordid motives. The scientific student who pours out his life in research; the doctor who offers his talents, and it may be life itself, in helping the needy, often with very little reward; the mother who wears herself out for the sake of her children; the unnumbered kindnesses of man to man—are not these among the choicest things in the world?

Jesus again and again appealed to something in men that was not a motive either of fear or of gain. In the story to-day we see how some men responded. They left an occupation where their living was assured to join One who had nowhere to lay His head. A fool's enterprise you might call it. Certainly neither fear nor hope of reward could enter in. Jesus called men to serve their fellows and they obeyed. The nation calls men to lay down their lives in war, and they come. Why should not industry call men into the noble service of making what men need for the joy of helping their fellows?

Sixth Day.

Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead. There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him. Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment. Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's *son*, which should betray him, Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein. Then said Jesus, Let her

alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this. For the poor always ye have with you: but me ye have not always. (John xii. 1-8.)

Perhaps this would mean lessened production, at any rate for a time. But it may be that many people would really be better off if they were worse off. Perhaps one reason that the way of Jesus seems so difficult and unattractive is that we have become too much bound up in things, and are not placing the right values on our own acts or those of others.

Some years ago young people were brought from London who had committed various crimes. They were put in a lovely country place and allowed to run wild. They were fed and cared for and not told that they could only have food if they worked for it. They seemed the most unfavourable type for such an experiment, yet one after another they came and asked for work—some not until they had been idle for weeks. One reason why people will only work under stern economic necessity is that the whole structure of society has been wrong: they have never known the joy of work for its own sake. To be idle is the only way they know of showing they are economically free. There is nothing to prove that man is by nature so idle that he will only work if driven to it.

Jesus planned to substitute a finer motive than fear or personal gain. That motive is love. In this incident we see how love prompted a reckless gift irrespective of cost. Jesus approved, not because He did not care for the poor, as we well know by His whole life, but because He had a different set of values and He saw the true spiritual value of this gift. Such service makes life beautiful and calls forth the spirit of service in others. Do we know the joy of serving out of pure love? If not, we have missed one of the finest things in life.

Seventh Day.

There came then his brethren and his mother, and, standing without, sent unto him, calling him. And the multitude sat about him, and they said unto him, Behold thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee. And he answered them, saying, Who is my mother, or my brethren? And he looked round about on them which sat about him, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother. (Mark iii. 31-35.)

We come back to-day, in the light of these three weeks' study, and ask what light we have gained on this family idea of society. Is it not clear that if the world were like a family it would be a totally different place from what we now see? Can we picture the difference more clearly now that we have studied these principles? A totally new idea of society, a social order in which men really acted to one another as to brothers, in which we cared more for another's freedom than our own, in which justice was secured through forgiving love, in which our ambition took the form of seeking for opportunities to serve. This, according to Jesus, is God's will, and those who do God's will are in His family. Paul says, "The earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God." Is it any wonder he felt this when he saw what a totally different world the "sons of God" were in.

Yes, they are in it already. They are not simply trying to create it—for them it is a present fact. This is what Jesus meant when He said, "Of such is the kingdom of God," "The kingdom of God is within you." Already He possessed within His own experience the secret and promise of the new order. He gathers into His family those who know this new life at work in them. "Except one be born anew he cannot see the kingdom of God." To be members of the family we must be born into it.

When the family interests are first in all our lives it is easy to see how we find the solution to many questions.

We find freedom in fellowship: we seek justice through love. We are ambitious to serve. Next week we shall turn to the problem of ways and means. To-day let us close the study by allowing ourselves to dwell on the glorious prospect of such a world and asking ourselves if we are ready to pay the price in our own lives.

GENERAL NOTES

We set ourselves a very serious problem this week and one on which there may well be strong differences of opinion. What motive is adequate to keep the world's work going and to secure true progress? Darwin has taught us to see, all through life, the struggle for existence. We recognize this as a factor in the evolution of higher from lower forms, and in the survival of the fittest. Through countless ages a process seems to have been going on in which the weak have been crushed by the strong. In the early stages of man's history we can see the same stern fight. Even to-day, wars, strikes, revolutions tell the same tale.

In the midst of all this a voice is raised which seems to announce another and a higher law. Above the sound of battle is the song, "Peace on earth, goodwill among men," that announced the coming of Jesus. He summons men to an entirely new struggle. He tells them they can never know this true society—this Kingdom of God—until they struggle to serve one another in love, until they have lost their passion for personal ends. "He who would gain life must lose it."

Is there anything in this view of life? We may remember that scientists such as Kropotkin or Kidd have seen a new idea working even in the animal world, called the "struggle for the life of others." This is seen in the mother who will give her life for her cubs, in the spirit which binds the pack together. Is this a foretaste of the new law that Jesus announced?

At any rate, there can be no question that this thought of Jesus alters a great many of our preconceived notions. Let the group try to decide what the scale of payment would be and what place there is for bargaining, for example, in such a world as Jesus thought of. Let us consider the wage-system in the light of this thought of service. Let us look again at capitalism and at exploitation. Let us ask ourselves what it is that has been the incentive for the things in our own life that we have most satisfaction in looking back upon.

We saw at an earlier point that in the debate between competition and co-operation there is something to be said on both sides. Can we now go back to our conclusions and ask ourselves whether they have been confirmed or changed by this week's study ?

The group should also save a little time to review the whole set of ideas which have occupied these three weeks. We saw that one chief fault in society was its lack of purpose. Here we come back to the question, What is the purpose for human society as Jesus saw it, and how does this compare with other goals ? Is it the same as that of Karl Marx, and if not, why is it different ? Is it more or less revolutionary ? Where does the revolution Jesus thought of begin ?

Unity, equality of opportunity, freedom for self-expression, true fellowship, right relations with others, co-operation—these are some of the characteristics of the family life where God is our Father. Is there anything in these ideas which is contrary to our highest ideals ? Have we any ideal for human society which is not included in some way in these and similar characteristics of such a family ? These are the questions the group must ask if it is to form an estimate of the value of the standard of Jesus as we now see it more clearly. Let us try to think these things through and not be afraid of the consequences of our thinking.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What would be the best motive for economic production and why ?

2. Can this motive really be effective in keeping the economic machine at work ?

3. What idea of leadership have we got, and how does this compare with the ideas of Jesus as we have studied them this week ?

4. What would be our idea of an ideal wage-system ? Compare results with earlier records on the same topic.

5. Reviewing the foundations of the social order as Jesus stated them in word and life, how do they impress us—

(*a*) As to their desirability ?
(*b*) As to their revolutionary character ?
(*c*) As to their practicability ?

We need not spend long on the last point, as it comes up in the following studies. Here we can record a first impression.

SIXTH WEEK

THE MEANS AND THE END

First Day.

And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains and be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. (Isa. ii. 2-4.)

Nothing less than a complete transformation of society seems to be required if the ideas of Jesus are to be expressed in our social order. The question we have now to consider, is How can such a transformation be effected? It is always very important, in considering method, to get the end in view quite clearly before our minds. By a confusion as to the end we may easily make the mistake of using a method which cannot possibly bring the results we desire.

To take one example in recent history. The Great War was called a " war to end war." It would of course be possible to end war by killing off everyone in the world. But, short of this, war never can end war. It multiplies the hatred and prejudice and bitterness that are prime causes of war. Real peace can never come because one part of the world impresses its idea of good upon the other. Nor can freedom be created by means which essentially

deny or lower the value of the person, as does war. Freedom has no meaning apart from personal worth. Therefore the war method is not calculated to achieve some of the ends for which those who fought sincerely hoped.

The end for society which Jesus saw may be expressed something like this: "A world-family in which each child has freedom and lives in fellowship with his brethren and with his Father; where justice is sought and established through patient love and forgiveness, enduring the wrong rather than retaliating; where men strive neither for wealth nor for mastery, but for positions of service; where there is true co-operation, all seeking by love to serve one another." Let this idea of the true social order grip us, and let us think over what this means for us in the matter of method.

Second Day.

And again he entered into Capernaum, after *some* days; and it was noised that he was in the house. And straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive *them*, no, not so much as about the door: and he preached the word unto them. And they come unto him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four. And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken *it* up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay. When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee. But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts, Why doth this *man* thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only? And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts? Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, *Thy* sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house. And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion. (Mark ii. 1-12.)

The first question that confronts is us that of changing the conditions. We are bound to recognize that (1) the present conditions are in themselves a denial of and a challenge to the standard of Jesus Christ; (2) these conditions make it hard, if not impossible, for many people to become what they were meant to be; (3) they should therefore be changed, and very radically changed.

At the same time we must admit that a change in conditions is not enough. Jesus told the rich young ruler that his wealth stood in his way, and He seemed to think the poor (though not necessarily the destitute) had actually a better chance of entering the Kingdom of God than the rich. To assume that changed conditions, by giving many a better chance, are going to make men better, is to assume something that is contrary to experience. Among the poor we find many beautiful characters under conditions which seem hopeless—among the rich there are many villains under what we should call very favourable conditions.

The problem may be stated thus: Are we to try to change conditions first and hope that men will thus be more easily changed, or are we to try to change men and hope that such changed men will alter the conditions? Where shall the reformer begin?

The story for to-day gives some idea of the answer of Jesus. Here is a man whose disease is a condition making it hard for him to love God and accept His will. Jesus deals with both the man and his conditions. *First* He seeks to change the man himself. But He does not stop there. He enlists the man himself on His side in an effort to change conditions.

Can this incident be taken as a guide for our work to-day? By concentrating on conditions alone, or even by dealing with them first and leaving the problem of changing persons to come later, can we hope to create a family? What is there in the method of Jesus which is frequently forgotten by social reformers and revolutionaries?

While Jesus believed in the immense possibilities in every man and appealed fearlessly to men, He never made the mistake of shutting His eyes to sin—the fact that men have something in them which holds them back from realizing these possibilities.

Third Day.

And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing. Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take *it*, and likewise *his* scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one. For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end. And they said, Lord, behold, here *are* two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough. (Luke xxii. 35-38.)

And behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out *his* hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest's, and smote off his ear. Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. (Mat. xxvi. 51-52.)

We come back to-day to another problem already touched on. Can we secure the end we have in view by coercion? It is clear that what we need is no mere change of conditions, however desirable that end may be. We need to create a new spirit in the world, and that needs new men and women. Can man be coerced into real goodness? No doubt coercion may prevent men from doing evil, but what effect does it often have upon their *desire* to do evil? Think of times when as a child you were prevented from doing something you greatly wanted to do, or even merely forbidden to do it. What was the effect upon your desires as apart from the effect on your action? Psychologists tell us that many nervous and other ills are due to "suppressed desire." This forcible suppression may work an immediate good at the expense of a great future ill. What is the usual effect of prison on the criminal? It might be well to discover

how many criminals in your town are habitual ones—that is, how many people in jail at certain times are serving second, third, fourth or later sentences. The actual facts might surprise some of us.

When Jesus told His disciples to take a sword He seems almost to suggest that the time has now come for coercion. But the incident which follows shows clearly that He was using figurative language, as we also see by His impatient "That is enough" when His followers failed to see the real meaning. It was said in the early Church that Jesus, in disarming Peter, disarmed all His followers. Do you think this follows either from this incident or from all that we have learned of the ideas of Jesus in these weeks?

Fourth Day.

And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem, and found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting: And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables; And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise. And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up. (John ii. 13-17.)

So Jesus Himself resorted to violence when necessary. This certainly looks as if He believed that there was some place for coercion. Before we try to examine that problem further let us look closely at the incident. In the first place, the whip of small cords (often quoted as if it justified the use of guns and poison-gas) was only used on the cattle. This is perfectly clear in the Greek. Secondly, even if it were used on the people it is clearly quite impossible for one man, relying only on such a weapon, to drive forth a crowd of persons whose profits are being stopped. Thirdly, here is one man against a number: we are bound to ask what was the power on which he relied? Is it not clear that it was the power of a person-

ality who was in the right—the spiritual force which in the last resort, if we but knew how to use it, is far more powerful than any physical one.

In the light of this and other things we have been learning about Jesus, are we justified in saying:

1. That coercion must not be used in any way that deprives a man of his free choice between good and ill?

2. That coercion must be used, if at all, only in the interests of love and with the good of the coerced person always in mind?

3. That coercion must not break our fellowship with others?

4. That coercion is not creative, at best it only restrains and should be used with the utmost care and afterthought, not in a moment of unthinking passion?

5. That the indiscriminate use of coercion against masses of people, at long range, and against many who are not themselves guilty, is not a Christian method?

6. That where coercion is used it should be under conditions that ensure its impartial and judicial rather than its retaliatory use—and above all it should be the instrument of redemption?

Can we say anything more about coercion from the point of view of Jesus? Does this study help us to see the difference between an army and a police force? Between a father dealing with his son and a king coercing his subjects?

Fifth Day.

Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred. And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a

pinnacle of the temple, and saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in *their* hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him. (Matt. iv. 1-11.)

This story relates an inward struggle in the life of Jesus. No doubt it reached the disciples from the lips of Jesus, and He probably put it into pictorial form so that they should the more easily remember. The point of the struggle seems to lie in the question as to whether it was legitimate to make any kind of compromise in seeking to establish the Kingdom of God. Taking the third temptation only (as we have no time to examine each in detail), we see the possibility of an immediate success opened up to Jesus if for a moment He would give place to the spirit of evil. This is the kind of suggestion that comes to a reformer who, in order to gain a position from which his influence can be felt, will pay a bribe or consent to immoral practices. How easy it must seem to regain the lost ground; how small the price in order to gain a larger opportunity; how hard to wait and perhaps never to reach the position coveted, not for personal reasons, but for the sake of the good that can be done by getting there!

Nothing seems more admirable in the life of Jesus than His steadfast refusal to compromise with evil. The arguments are often very subtle and the idea of personal advancement often biases those who wish to be quite impartial in judging. Is it worth getting a position, even of great possibilities of good, if you have to sell your soul? When you reach it by the methods of compromise will you be able to do what you now desire? Will you find

yourself bound hand and foot by your own past? Jesus was bound to the Cross, but He was never bound by any unworthy compromise: He was always free to speak His whole mind and to stand for His whole ideal. Is not such freedom truly enviable? This way of Jesus is clearly no child's play. It takes a man to follow it.

Sixth Day.

Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews? Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me? Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done? Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice. Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault *at all.* (John xviii. 33-38.)

The story we read yesterday was not an isolated experience of Christ's. All through His life the possibility kept opening up to Him. Once they tried to make Him king, thinking no doubt that He would lead them against the Roman tyrant (John vi. 15). On another occasion they led Him into the city with shouts and were ready to follow Him in a revolt. Jesus was seeking another kind of kingdom. We cannot doubt that He shared the desire of His nation for political freedom, and wished to help them to a larger life than was possible under the Roman yoke. But He saw that there was only one road which led to the goal. A few years later the Jews did rise in revolt. They were crushed by Rome, and never after (till the last year or two) have they had a home of their own. The

method of revolt which Jesus refused to follow did actually fail.

But what of the way of Jesus? Let us picture this scene. Pilate represents the greatest known power in the world with its wealth and organization, its armies and its laws—the Roman Empire. Jesus stands before him unarmed, forsaken, with no influence and no following. Jesus believed that all power had been given to Him (Matt. xxviii. 18). Rome crushed Jesus. Militarism triumphed over love. But mark the sequel. In four hundred years' time Jesus' followers had multiplied by tens of thousands and Rome was decaying. To-day the Roman Empire is a subject only for historical study: Jesus is worshipped in every nation, and millions would die for Him. Which power is proved greater? Did Jesus, in refusing to compromise in turning from the sword, actually establish a kingdom more enduring than any He could have gained in other ways? What does this mean for the social reformer?

Seventh Day.

Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in *his* talk. And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any *man:* for thou regardest not the person of men. Tell us therefore, what thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar, or not? But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, *ye* hypocrites? Shew me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a penny. And he saith unto them, Whose *is* this image and superscription? They say unto him, Cæsar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's; and unto God the things that are God's. When they had heard *these words*, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way. (Matt. xxii. 15-22.)

The week's study has raised a very interesting and far-reaching problem. If we accept the standard of Jesus

and choose His way, what will it mean in our relation to the State? His contemporaries clearly saw that the issue was raised, and they brought it to Him in a concrete problem. Should they pay taxes to a State that was actually unjustly oppressing them? This form of the question is a very difficult and yet a very practical one. He answered, as He so often did, by an act that was a picture. They had to work out the problem for themselves; He simply supplied the material for the answer.

Would it be a fair way of summarizing this answer to say that Jesus recognizes the right of the State in regard to property but not in regard to personality? No doubt the State has certain rights which must be recognized, yet it would seem at times to claim what no one ought to give. Would you be justified in answering the call of the State to fight in a war that you felt to be clearly in an unjust cause—*e.g.*, to oppress a weak nation? Suppose you believed war to be wrong in itself, what should be your attitude when the State to which you belonged went to war in a cause that seemed to you a just one? These are questions which concern personality. Can we ever give to the State the same unquestioning obedience that we owe to God or to the whole human family?

Yet the State has a certain function in regard to social reconstruction. What can State action do, and what can it not do? If the State compromises or coerces in ways we cannot approve in seeking for an end we do approve, how are we to act? These are some of the questions that Jesus' standard raises for those who accept it. They will engage our further thought. (*Cf. Christ and Cæsar.*)

GENERAL NOTES

What has our week's study revealed to us about the method of social progress that is calculated to produce the kind of world that Jesus spoke about—the Kingdom of God? So far our study is mainly negative. We

see that a world-family needs for its establishment something more than changed conditions, that coercion is at best a very doubtful weapon to use, and that we compromise at infinite peril. This may suggest at first sight that we cannot use any of the ordinary methods of action, and that we had better attempt something less ambitious than such a world-family. In fact, we are facing again the apparent impracticability of this ideal.

Let us apply these thoughts to a consideration of the three methods of social progress that are commonly advocated, politics, revolution and education. In politics men have to legislate for the average man—that is to to say, we cannot pass laws that at once achieve our ideal, because men are not yet able to see their value or work them fully. Such legislation becomes a dead-letter. This involves some degree of compromise. It is well known that statesmen and politicians constantly have to compromise in order to pass laws, both by lowering their own ideals and by supporting other things they do not approve that they may secure the support of persons who will only give it on such terms.

How far is such compromise justifiable, and what are the conditions which should be insisted on if it is to be used at all ?

Again, political action involves some measure of coercion. Just how much depends upon the size of the majority, the vigour of the minority and so forth. In some cases it may amount to using armed force. Is it true to say that a voter in a democratic society virtually signifies his willingness to accept the rule of the majority, and that therefore such government is by *consent* rather than by coercion ? Very often the fact that such force can be used if needed acts as a strong factor in securing obedience to law. This method may be of value in recording the advance made in public thinking and in preventing a minority from holding back advance, but can it create a family ? This is the question we have to press home

if we are to consider the relation of politics to the standard of Jesus. Politics, in short, seems to concentrate on conditions and to secure changes in conditions both by compromise and by coercion.

When we consider revolution we can easily see why it appeals to many who feel the political method to be slow and dangerous. Violent revolution calls for fearless uncompromising action and enlists many who are ready to die for an ideal. It is often a creative force liberating new ideas in the world. What it gains in these directions it generally loses in being so largely coercive. Moreover, the fact that there is a class-war and that bitterness and hatred are increased means that it is so much harder to create a true family. Very generally revolutions lead to reaction, and the gains are much less than we hoped. Judged by this week's study, can we say that violent revolution is a good means of creating a family ?

The method of education is open to many fewer objections. It seeks to deal with men's spirits and not simply with conditions. It should not be coercive, although some types of education do actually amount to a form of coercion, as young people are forced into a certain mould. There is no need to compromise with your ideal, although the close relation of education to the State often results in bringing pressure on teachers to do so. The method of education may seem to be a very slow one, but after all, if it will produce the result aimed at, will it not be better than an apparently quick method that does not get us any farther in the end ?

The group might well spend time in considering how far our education is really creative and helping to form a world family of the kind Jesus thought of. For example, is it so influenced by the State idea as to create a narrow patriotism rather than an international spirit ? Is it so influenced by business ideas as to train for competition and self-advancement rather than for co-operation or

service? Do the children learn the joy of giving and fear to become too rich? Are the methods of discipline consistent with the idea of justice through love? Is the fundamental idea respect for the personality of the child, an attempt to develop this for freedom and service, training the child to take his right place in the community? In this connection we can recall the tremendous emphasis that Jesus placed on the children and on the child spirit.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What can we say negatively about the methods which will be effective for realizing the ideas of Jesus for a new social order?

2. Can we reach any agreement as to the use of coercion in principle and as applied, for example, in the training of children, in the restraint of criminals, in the making of laws, in international war, in labour disputes?

3. What do we mean by compromise? Is there any place for compromise of any kind, and if so, of what kind? What are its dangers—

(*a*) To the compromiser?
(*b*) To the realization of social ends?

4. What is the value and what the danger of—

(*a*) Revolution,
(*b*) Political action,
(*c*) Education,

in relation to the hope of creating a world family?

5. Can you reach any agreement on the limits of the duty a man owes to the State? Be clear in defining the difference between the State, the nation and the community.

SEVENTH WEEK

CREATIVE LOVE IN ACTION

(*a*) The Individual

First Day.

And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: and he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying, Blessed *are* the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed *are* they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed *are* the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed *are* they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Blessed *are* the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed *are* the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Blessed *are* the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed *are* they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when *men* shall revile you, and persecute *you*, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great *is* your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you. (Matt. v. 1-12.)

We have seen that the beginning of the revolution according to Jesus Christ is in the life of the individual. This week we are to study the type of life out of which a new social order can be built, or, in other words, the type of persons who will be the creators of such an order. All social systems are caused by the action and interaction of persons. Selfish persons produce soulless systems. What kind of person is needed to create a world family?

This was the problem of Jesus and He stated in very simple language the type He thought of as the creators of the Kingdom of God. They would be blessed, not because happiness was their chief aim, but because "they had chosen the right means to a good end, because they

will gain their end " (G. B. Robson, *The Way to Personality*). Each of these sentences is worthy of a separate study. To-day we can only gain a general view of the type as a whole, and each beatitude can be summarized for this end.

The creator of the new order, then, will be (1) one who is not blinded to realities by ease and wealth, but who faces hardship and lives dangerously; (2) one who is keenly alive to the world's ills, shares them in his spirit, has the divine discontent that in the end makes things better; (3) one who is humble and teachable and who combines patience and perseverance, as does the man of science face to face with hard facts; (4) one who has a passion for righteousness in himself and in his relations with others, and will never be satisfied till things are right; (5) one who is kind-hearted and does not let his theories, however good, blind him to human need, who seeks justice through love; (6) one who is utterly sincere and gives his life to one purpose with complete devotion, turning from the temptation to please himself or satisfy his lower nature; (7) one who will fling himself into the place of conflict determined to find a true solution and to bring people together in common service and understanding; (8) one who is prepared to pay the price, whatever it may be, even in isolation and misunderstanding from foe or friend.

Compare this summary, point by point, with the passage read, and see if, in your opinion, it gives in each case the true meaning of the words of Jesus.

Do these qualities strike you as those which will work out into a system like the present one—competition, exploitation, militarism and so forth ? If not, how will they be expressed in the social order ?

Second Day.

Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and

the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it. And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as *one* having authority, and not as the scribes. (Matt. vii. 24-29.)

The three chapters that begin with the verses we read yesterday and end with those we read to-day, are an exposition of the type of individual who can create the new social order and the way in which he will set about his task in such a world as this. People who will hate, despise, judge, injure him are in this picture, all about him. His action in face of the difficulties is the action of one who already knows the reality of the new social order. The young man who, when he quoted these teachings as his justification for refusing to fight, was told that "the kingdom of God has not yet come," answered "It has come for me." He already had the family spirit. The world is full of people who admire the teaching and ideals of Jesus and who say, "The world is not yet ready for this," which is their way of saying it is futile or too hard to attempt to live in such a way until everyone else is doing the same, or until the world as a whole is better. What is the good of waiting till all the world is better before we attempt to live like this? Will the world ever get better through such action or inaction? How can the world be made ready save by some daring to go first?

Jesus believed that some would have to go first even if they died for it, and He believed that this was the quickest and only sure way of making the world better. Many said, "Very good, very good," and then went away and did not do the things they approved. They thought it was safer not to be too revolutionary in following Jesus.

They remembered all the practical difficulties. They supposed they were wise. Jesus said they were like fools building their whole life on sand! Those who were so unpractical as to dare to follow Jesus' way, even in a world that was unready, were not fools as the others thought, but wise men building on rock.

How do you account for this difference of judgment? What fact was to Jesus like the rock on which it was safe to build the social order—a rock which other people simply did not see?

Third Day.

There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: the same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and *of* the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit. Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be? (John iii. 1-9.)

We closed yesterday with a difficult question. To-day's passage may help us in the answer. Here was a man who was accounted wise coming to Jesus with a problem he did not like to state, just because his dignity made him afraid to seem a fool. Jesus shows him that he simply is not seeing the most important thing in life. He had to begin all over again as it were, to become like a child, ready to learn and eager to know. Then, and then only, could he see for himself what was so obvious to Jesus—

that God was indeed a loving Father, that he was meant to act as His son, that this was life to know God and to become son-like.

This experience which Jesus called being born again was, in His view, the very beginning of the revolution for which the world waited. In men would be created a new disposition like a child's. The type of person we saw to be needed for this great work of social re-creation can be produced by a divine reaction within each personality. We cannot understand the social message of Jesus unless we begin where He began. We cannot build a new social order out of ideas and ideals however good, nor by altering conditions until they are nothing short of perfect. It is " living stones " that are needed.

It is this which brings men into the family and makes them actually seek the good of the family before all else. It is this which gives them the secret of a freedom that is not a danger to others, of a justice that is not harsh and abstract and can always forgive, of an ambition that leads us earnestly to seek for the lowest place of service and makes us indifferent to wealth and honour.

The point to be perfectly clear about is this—the end is a family. The way to get a family must be by making sons and daughters. God is the Father. Therefore we must be sons of His. The relation of means to end is perfectly simple—a child can see it—but the wise still ask, " How can these things be ? "

Fourth Day.

And *Jesus* entered and passed through Jericho. And, behold, *there was* a man named Zacchæus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich. And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature. And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycomore tree to see him: for he was to pass that *way*. And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchæus, make haste, and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house. And he made haste, and came down, and

received him joyfully. And when they saw *it* they all murmured saying, that he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner. And Zacchæus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor, and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore *him* fourfold. And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost. (Luke xix. 1-10.)

" Yes, the way is very simple, but people will not take it," is the remark some may make after our study yesterday. In this story we can see how Jesus tried it out on an unlikely person. There were two ways by which the Jews were hoping to change the evil systems of bondage to Rome and the consequent tax-system. One was political, the way of compromise, trying to use influence to get things changed from above. The other way was revolutionary, by violence seeking to throw off the tyranny and kill those who did wrong. Both parties despised and hated those men who took the Roman pay for exacting the taxes. They would have nothing to do with them and so had no influence upon them. They said in their hearts, " These men are hopeless."

Not so Jesus. He refused these two methods only in order to use a still better one. He went to the house of the tax-gatherer. He showed him that He believed in his better self and called him a " son of Abraham." His trust in this " hopeless " man was justified. When Jesus left him a new day began. Very likely he soon found he would have to leave his work, as Matthew did. But, at any rate, he began by trying to do the work in an entirely different way.

Here are men to-day caught up in an evil system. Some seek to change the system by laws, others by bombs. There is a third way—to believe in the divine possibilities even of those who are working it—to go to them in sympathy and hope—to help them to be true to their higher instinct—and so first to introduce even into this

system a different spirit, and so finally to cause the system itself to fall to pieces because there are not enough people left who are willing to work it. This was the method of Jesus in the case of Zacchæus. What are the advantages and disadvantages of this plan? (*Cf. The Galilean*, by N. Micklem, chapter on "The Great Offensive.")

Fifth Day.

I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against *them*. And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled *them* to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted *them* even unto strange cities. Whereupon as I went to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests, at midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? *It is* hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and *from* the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, *and* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me. Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: but shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judæa, and *then* to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance. (Acts xxvi. 9-20.)

These are the words of a man who came under the influence of Jesus after His death. Paul is here making his defence before King Agrippa, and he tells briefly the

story of the change. He was one who had been "working an evil system." He had imprisoned many who were doing what they believed to be their duty, and had voted for their death. Then something happened to him. The appeal of Jesus came to him in a direct way. He found not only that he could no longer work the evil system, but that he must devote his entire life to building up the new social order. All his training, association, prejudices were ranged against his taking such a step. It cost him his position; it lost him his friends; it left him alone and misunderstood even by those with whom he now wished to join himself. Is it any wonder, when such a change had taken place in him, that he wrote afterwards to Rome, "I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God"? (Rom. i. 16.) The power was actually greater than that of Rome—greater than all the influences that tend to keep a man in the habits created through years of education and confirmed in an active life. His story is told again by himself in Philippians iii. 1-8, where he says he "suffered the loss of all things."

Can we understand such a transformation? Is it not like being born again? Jesus believed men could be re-created like this, and therefore He thought His plan for the social order was not only good but practicable. If we say it is impracticable, may it not be because we do not share this conviction? Those who do share the conviction are those who have the experience of God in their own lives, who "have not been disobedient to the heavenly vision." It would be absurd to expect that the conviction would be shared by those who have never known the actual fact on which it is based. Have we known this fact? Do we wish to do so?

Sixth Day.

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every *branch* that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth

more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye *are* the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast *them* into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and *that* your joy might be full. This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. (John xv. 1-12.)

A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all *men* know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. (John xiii. 34, 35.)

It was not only one great experience, such as Paul had, by which Jesus believed men could become convinced of the practicability of the Kingdom of God and therefore themselves creators of it. What they needed was a continuous inflow of power, like the sap which keeps rising up in the vine, filling the leaves and causing the buds to open and the fruit to develop. This is the result of an organic connection. There is one life in root, trunk, branch, leaf, flower, fruit. Because Jesus believed that this life was actually present in some men and might be present in all, He was tremendously hopeful and dared to preach "the kingdom of God is at hand."

What is this life? How can men know it? The new commandment which fulfils all the law is Love. God is love. It is by means of loving acts and words that men know God and experience His life. As we love, the life of God comes into us. "He that continues to love continues in union with God and God continues in union

with him " (1 John iv. 16). This is the idea that Jesus passed on to His disciples in the last hours He was with them. Love is not only the foundation of the new social order. It is the life-blood of a new social organism. The idea of Jesus for human society needs this life-blood if it is ever to live. It is through men and women that the life-blood must flow: there can be no other way.

Creative love in action, through the individual—this is the amazingly simple message of Jesus as to the method of realizing the world of His dreams. Does it seem an impossible plan—if God is indeed love, and if we are so made that we too can love ?

Seventh Day.

Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord *is* gracious. To whom coming, *as unto* a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, *and* precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe *he is* precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, *even to them* which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed. But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: which in time past *were* not a people, but *are* now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy. (1 Pet. ii. 1-10.)

It is the very simplicity of this way that so often makes people afraid to take it or unwilling to believe in it. In this passage we have first the contrast between the old way of life and the new, between the methods of a wrong social system and those of the new. These " new-born

babes" are sure to be imposed upon, and to suffer. People will take advantage of them, and just because of such results many will stumble at the way of the Cross.

How many builders of what they are pleased to call a new social order reject this stone! They are determined to try what seems like a short cut—a way that will not entail ridicule and self-denial and loneliness and patience and forgiveness. So they rush forward with their schemes; they win applause; they gather a crowd, whether of voters or of rebels; they announce their gospel and lead forth their sheep to the slaughter, to disappointment and finally to cynical disbelief in any better world. This has been done over and over again.

Those who try the way of Jesus will certainly have hardship, but many who have suffered most will tell you they are not disillusioned—they still have hope, because they have a continuing source of hope. Within the old order they have already the promise of the new. They are making, as it were, islands in the ocean of darkness and despair. They believe that these islands contain the promise and assurance of the continent that is yet to be. This is what Jesus has actually done for many people; and this is why in the ranks of those who have really counted in freeing the slave, in raising womanhood, in liberating children, in healing the sick, a foremost place is held by the followers of Jesus.

Let us ask ourselves very seriously whether, if we should see this to be the way of social progress, we are prepared to take it.

GENERAL NOTES

This week's work carries us to the heart of the constructive part of the programme of Jesus. We shall have to see next week in greater detail how it works out in relation to the wider activities of men. But it is clear that Jesus did not launch a programme on the world without giving careful thought to the way in which it

was to be realized. We may agree or disagree with the programme; we may accept the method or reject it. But we can scarcely fail to see that the means do fit the end, and that if we have a programme like this before us we cannot expect to see it carried into effect by anything less than a revolution which begins with the individual.

In an earlier study we saw that Jesus did not make the mistake of forgetting the forces of evil in the world. They must be taken into account, and they must be challenged and overcome in the only place where this can possibly be done—in men's hearts. Jesus offered Himself as the Saviour of the world. He said " Come unto me." His own personality was flung into the battle with sin. He faced it in pure love. He chose and always used the weapon of patient endurance of wrong, forgiving His murderers almost with His last breath. In this great act we are told that He " bore the sin of the world," and so, as He put it " overcame the world." Many people have professed a faith in the saving power of Christ, who have failed to see that His way must be ours also if we would join in His work of saving the world. He does not call us simply to a passive faith. He calls us to active partnership with Himself. It is in this partnership that we can, He assures us, find the fullest development of our own personality and the largest scope for all our powers. To men who will be partners with Him He offers a never-failing source of power for the otherwise impossible tasks. He calls this His own Spirit, or the Spirit of Truth, or the Father dwelling in them, and various other things. This power comes through the connection of the individual with the central source of power in the universe. All men can be thus connected. Love is the connection.

This is a very simple statement of what Jesus put before men. He believed something might happen in any man that would make him a creator of the new world. He saw every man as a possible partner. Even Zacchæus the money-grubbing tax-collector, or Paul the bitter opponent,

could be transformed into a creative personality through love. They would thus become the channels of love.

It is impossible to say that Jesus was never disappointed. We have seen something of His disappointment over Judas. But He went on hoping—because He saw clearly that there was no other way of making a new world and because behind all the outward appearances He saw, as the central fact in the universe, that God is love.

The group should consider whether Jesus made a huge mistake in His judgment of what the universe is, in His estimate of men or in His hope for the future. We should also face the problem of how far He was right in thinking that the revolution must begin in the individual. It will be worth while to try to reconstruct the type of the creative personality as Jesus saw him, and ask ourselves if we know any such, and if there is anything in this idea of manhood which appeals to us. Would it be true to say that if the world were peopled with such persons wars would cease? Would it be true to say that a much larger number of such persons in the world would greatly change the evils of the present industrial system and perhaps even lead to its substitution by a better one? In that case, how do you think such substitution would be effected?

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What type of personality is needed to create a world family? A brief interchange of ideas, where each gave his answer, would be helpful.

2. Is the world ready for such persons? If not, how can it ever be made ready? Must we wait to act until we are assured of adequate support?

3. What can the moral pioneers expect? This can be shown by historical instances.

4. Is there any power which can produce the kind of person needed for creating this family? And if so, what is it? In what sense do we actually believe in this power?

5. Why is the Cross a stumbling-block?

EIGHTH WEEK

CREATIVE LOVE IN ACTION

(*b*) The Group

First Day.

Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel but on a candlestick: and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. (Matt. v. 13-16.)

Having clearly seen the type of individual needed to create the new social order, we can proceed to consider how such individuals, by acting together, can carry out this creative service. Men cannot be considered merely as separate individuals, and this is especially true when we are considering their influence on society. It is in association with others that such persons can become the most effective agents of a true reconstruction.

It is clear that Jesus expected the group of His followers to act unitedly as a company of friends. They were to be like a city set on a hill. The light was to shine forth showing the world what a fine thing it would be if all would accept and follow it. The Church, in essence, was intended to be the body that showed in its own fellowship the nature of the new social order. Paul tells his friends in the Roman colony of Philippi that they were to be "a colony of heaven." As Rome sent her citizens to live in a non-Roman city and show what Rome

stood for, so God sent his sons to live in a world not yet like a family and show what a family would be like. The early Church, as we shall see, had this idea. Of the Church of to-day it has been said, "It has not persuaded men of the reality of the Kingship of God, save as some far distant ideal. The saving of society by a sort of Christian Fabianism and adulteration of the leaven must, one thinks, be regarded as a failure. Would it not be near the truth to change the figure a little and say that the Church has inoculated the world with a mild form of Christianity and made it proof against the real thing?"

We cannot defend against all criticism the Church as it is, although there is very much which it has accomplished. This week we are to study the idea of the Church as it ought to be, and we shall perhaps see what an immense power it might wield.

Second Day.

Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases. And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick. And he said unto them, Take nothing for *your* journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money; neither have two coats apiece. And whatsoever house ye enter into, there abide, and thence depart. And whosoever will not receive you, when ye go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them. And they departed and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing everywhere (Luke ix. 1-6.)

The first company of the friends of Jesus were joined together not by any uniformity of doctrine or by membership in one organization. They were one in the devotion to their Master and their readiness to suffer all in His service. It was unity in aim rather than in opinion. It was expressed in action rather than in words. It was this creative activity to which they were directly stimulated by living with Jesus.

Suppose a group of persons of the type we have dis-

covered to be needed were bound together in this way, what might they not do? The very fact that they were facing immense difficulties would serve to bind them together the more closely. There is a very intimate kind of unity which comes when we are engaged in a common struggle against odds. These first friends of Jesus went about in poverty, they were dependent upon the kindness of those who would receive them, they had a great message of hope for men and for society, they gave immediate relief to suffering where they could. Were they not, in a real sense, creators of a new society?

What do you think such a group of persons could do to-day? Do you think they would have any power in respect to a system so strongly entrenched as capitalism? Are the circumstances of our modern life so different as to render any comparison valueless? What would be the moral force of a body of persons who definitely refused to possess or use economic force, and political force and military force? Recent examples of the force of ideas might be quoted, as, for example, the cases of Karl Marx, Tolstoy, Ghandi, each one of whom has had what would be regarded as "influence" in starting a great movement of thought. Is there a call to-day for new ideas in the realm of creative love? If so, is it not clear that a group working together with a common aim might be a very important factor?

Third Day.

And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any *of them* that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all. Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid *them* down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need. And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of

consolation,) a Levite, *and* of the country of Cyprus, having land, sold *it*, and brought the money, and laid *it* at the apostles' feet. (Acts iv. 32-37.)

It has already been hinted that the group has a duty in making real the ideal for which it stands. There are many complex problems in regard to which the individual is powerless to act alone. A group who have the family spirit can begin to live like a family. This is what the first group of Christians did.

They faced the problems of the inequalities of wealth within their own membership. They did not content themselves simply with preaching equality. They did not try to introduce laws in order to create a communist State. They did not even work out any formal constitution for such a society themselves. They began by a recognition that they were members one of another, that none had any absolute right to his possessions, and they worked this out by a simple method of sharing as if they had actually been members of one family.

It is easy to say that this method was not very successful. It was more successful than some have thought and yet, no doubt, mistakes were made. But the important point is, that the group had discovered the distinctive method of action whereby the new social order may be established. Those in whom the spirit is already present are to come together to express that spirit in concrete form. This was the method which the early Church saw more or less clearly, which it followed for several generations, which was abandoned when Church and State joined together, and which has scarcely ever been seriously tried since. Has the time come when it might be tried again with advantage ?

Fourth Day.

Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been

brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid *their* hands on them, they sent *them* away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus. (Acts xiii. 1-4.)

This account of the action of the early Church is very suggestive. Evidently these people in Antioch were in the habit of meeting together in prayer. Clearly they expected to know God's will. On a certain occasion they have a clear conviction that a certain course of action is needed. They do not hesitate to take it although, no doubt, the two people concerned must have seemed to be indispensable. What does this show us as to the method of action in the Christian revolution ?

We are in a very complex order of society. How are we to discover what the Father's will for His family may be ? We have seen that Jesus believed there was such a will and purpose, and that unity and progress with peace could only be discovered along the line of that will. Here is a clue to the very puzzling question, How can we tell the right way ?

A group that will meet in fellowship, seeking the truth, determined to follow it, with open minds to learn it, may become acutely conscious of this divine leadership. Many cases of this are known to the writer. Do you know any such ?

If there is a divine purpose in society, is it not reasonable to suppose that there will be some way whereby society may discover it ? The way of all others would seem to be group thought and prayer, by people prepared to act, of one mind and soul, although with very different opinions and personalities.

In the case we have before us a great movement started from this beginning, and before long these men were making a revolution, turning the world upside down (Acts xvii. 6). May not revolution of the right kind be

waiting for groups like this who will wait on God? (See *The Way Forward for the Church*, also *The New State*, by M. P. Follett.)

Fifth Day.

When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. (Acts i. 6-8.)

The activities of such a group should be like spreading infection. Wherever they are they should be convincing people of the desirability and of the practicability of the new social order.

The disciples asked their Master if He was then to restore the Kingdom to Israel—*i.e.*, the freedom of their little State. His eyes were on a bigger thing—a world family. He told them to wait in fellowship and prayer, that they would become conscious of a new power, and then they would become witnesses (*i.e.*, a living demonstration) of the actual reality of this Kingdom, not in one place only, but beginning from that centre in widening circles all through the world. The rest of the Book of Acts shows how that actually happened. There is scarcely any part of the earth now where there are not some people joined together to try, by creative love in action, to show what the new social order should be like. You may see it in hospitals, in schools, in families, in groups working together at all kinds of problems. Such groups are the real Church. They are creating the new order—silently often, "coming not with observation," but by slow, unresting processes as the coral island arises through the action of numberless little animals each adding itself to the whole.

Such processes seem slow. But may that not be because of the imperfection of men or their lack of confident hope? Every person who has seen the truth that Jesus saw is called to be a propagandist of the new social order, bringing others to see what he sees, by persuasive love and daring example. The group that is really tackling a big social problem is sure to be a centre of infection. Do you think activities of this kind are needed in the world to-day? How can they be stimulated? Will they actually avail towards the changing of the system, so far as it should be changed?

Sixth Day.

And the same time there arose no small stir about that way. For a certain *man* named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver shrines for Diana, brought no small gain unto the craftsmen; whom he called together with the workmen of like occupation, and said, Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth. Moreover ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands: so that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought: but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth. And when they heard *these sayings*, they were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, Great *is* Diana of the Ephesians. And the whole city was filled with confusion: and having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel, they rushed with one accord into the theatre. (Acts xix. 23-29.)

The creative activity of a group of loving persons is sure to provoke opposition as well as to inspire emulation. Here is an instance in which a lucrative trade is threatened, and the representatives of the industry combine to stir up the people to active opposition. Suppose a group such as this we have been thinking of were to come out with a fearless denunciation of some particular industry where conditions were bad—sweated labour, overcrowding, child-labour, etc.—what would be the

result to-day? Trade is threatened. Many can be persuaded to believe that their own interests are identical with those of the capitalist group, let us say, who control an industry. To speak out fearlessly against social wrong must be one method of activity for the group. How easy to shrink from doing this for fear we lose our chance of doing anything at all!

Take the case of a church the support of which depends largely on some person engaged in a business where conditions are seriously wrong. If the minister speaks fearlessly, he may lose his job and so lose the power to make himself heard at all. Should he for this reason keep quiet? The group that is trying to make an experiment may be prevented from doing so, but can it therefore keep silence? What is the effect upon the public conscience of seeing a person or group of persons silenced by authority because they are true to conscience? May it not be that more is done to break down the system by the reaction against it in men's minds, when they see how cruel it can be, than even by the continuous talk of those who stand outside it and condemn it? The group's biggest contribution to the creation of the new social order might then be to die as a group.

Seventh Day.

But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven. And he laid *his* hands on them, and departed thence. And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? *there is* none good but one, *that is*, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. (Matt. xix. 14-17.)

The friends of Jesus seemed to be unwilling to accept the most ordinary traditions. This caused offence. Jesus shows that they were out for something so different from the old order that it could only find expression in

an entirely new one. To graft the new on to the old would do harm. A spirit came into the world with Jesus that can never express itself along the lines of a selfish and coercive order of society. When it tries to do so, either it becomes so modified as to cease to be distinctively Christian, it loses its message and significance, or else it actually bursts the old order and all ends in confusion.

For this reason the path of plain common sense is to seek always for a new embodiment of the new spirit, on the part of those who have that spirit. Is there not a danger of one or both of these things happening in our present social order? On the one hand, the Christian spirit, trying to work out in methods of organization and in a form of society which can never properly embody it, is losing its freshness and vitality and seems to have little creative power. On the other hand, the restless progressive spirit, working widely and affecting all types of persons, tends often to express itself more in mere destruction than in constructive effort. It is far easier to arouse enthusiasm than to guide it wisely. Ghandi called out a movement in India, beginning with non-resistance, but has been unable to control it, and so it has in places become violent and destructive. Do not the two dangers referred to arise because we have not clearly seen what is the method of creative love in action? How may they be avoided as we seek to give the spirit of progress and freedom full play in a world where there are many forces of reaction and oppression?

GENERAL NOTES

The problem for this week may be restated in the following words, "Given such personalities as we have seen to be needed, how can they so act together as to destroy the present social order and build a better one?" The group should seek an answer to the question, while

keeping close to our central thought that we are trying to discover the answer of Jesus to it, and that we have seen His ideal to be a world family. Let us remember again that in the last resort any system depends upon persons. No social order that is contrary to fundamental principles could be established or maintained if those principles were being carried out in the lives of all persons. This thought delivers us from the sense of being mere slaves of a system, from the thought of impotence in face of it, and from the despair of changing it which is far too common among otherwise right-thinking people. It is quite true that the system gives undue power to a few to maintain it against the will of the many, and that often the good instincts of people are rendered, to a large extent, inoperative by the fact that there is so little possibility of expressing them within a system which seems to pervade everything.

The problem presses very acutely in the Far East, which is steadily drifting towards the worst evils of Western industrialism without the factors which have checked those evils in the West being in anything like a strong enough position to do the same there. Those factors are mainly a progressively enlightened public conscience, a strong labour movement determined to protect the worker against exploitation, an effective central Government able to enforce laws that restrict such exploitation.

We may well consider the methods of action that can be employed by a group determined to act in the way of creative love. Some of these may be summed up in the following brief points:

1. To study the actual facts and to seek together the way in which to apply the principles of love to these facts. Fellowship in seeking the will of God, humbly, with a determined effort to see truth.

2. To proclaim truth either by way of showing up the evils of the system or of particular examples of it, or still

more by expressing in definite proposals the constructive way of dealing with social evils and creating a better social order.

3. To make daring experiments which will show in corporate action what the new spirit means. For example, to carry on a particular business in a way consistent with the principles we have studied. There may be failures in such experiments, but there is one thing worse than failure—never to try.

4. To make direct appeal to those who seem to be caught in the system, as Jesus did to Zacchæus. Often this may be done effectively by a group. Let us remember that merely to blame, especially in public, antagonizes people. Let us first try to call out the best in them and win them to our side.

5. To extend the group, always calling more people into fellowship in the common aim. If this method be carried on fearlessly, it means that we shall be steadily diminishing the numbers who are willing to work the system and so causing it some day to fall to pieces.

6. To accept such responsibilities as may be given as far as this can be done consistently with our principles and without making any fundamental compromise. (See *The Christian Revolution*, H. T. Hodgkin, chapter "Changing the System.")

These are some suggestions. The group should try to add others and to think out what these mean as applied to their own action, and to the problem of their own city, college, country, etc. It is possible that out of this study some groups may be formed that will wish to do some of these things. If so, let us remember what we studied last week as to the type of person needed for this creative work. Are we prepared to enter upon such a task, not as a mere pastime, but with all the seriousness of a great campaign—and in humility, recognizing that God alone can give the strength to carry it through? This would seem to be the kind of question Jesus put up to His

disciples. We have need to pray together if we are to answer such questions. A group that can pray together with reality and purpose, and that gains strength and insight in so doing, is certainly on the way to becoming a real factor in building the new social order.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What can we learn from the story of the early Church as to the way in which a group can act creatively in regard to the social order ?

2. What is divine guidance ? Do we know it ? Can we as a group take any steps to know it in our corporate life in regard to the problems we face together ?

3. Can we discover any general principles that may guide the action of such a group, and how far do the methods suggested in the general notes commend themselves to us as ways by which a world family can actually be formed ? Are any of them objectionable ? Are any others we can think of to be added ?

4. Has this particular group any piece of service in this college or city which could be better done by its holding together and thinking out some practical problems ? If so, what would be the basis of our united work ?

5. Can we hope for the creation of a new social order along the lines of this week's study ? Can we hope in this way to prevent class-war and other similar evils ?

NINTH WEEK

THE NEXT STEP

First Day.

When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth *his* sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed *thee?* or thirsty, and gave *thee* drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took *thee* in? or naked, and clothed *thee?* Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done *it* unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done *it* unto me. (Matt. xxv. 31-40.)

The principles and theories we have been discussing are of no use to us or to society, unless they are worked out in human lives. This week we must try to face some of the concrete situations in which the problem of application arises in our individual or in the common life. It is impossible, in a course of studies for general use, to do more than suggest such questions, for each person's problem is different from that of each other. Perhaps we may get a little bit farther on what may be called "the technique of loving" in our common search for truth.

While the life of Jesus is the expression of certain great truths about God and man, He was always alert to appreciate and meet the need of every person whom He met. There are those who are so concerned with the philosophy of life that they fail, in the simplest ways, in the art of living. Not so Jesus. The meaning of to-day's passage is, in part, this: Bring down your theories to the test of ordinary personal relationships; express them in terms of the people you meet every day, even the least important, or you have failed in the crucial test.

Could we not use the opportunity of this study to examine freshly our relationships with people we meet in everyday life—fellow-students, shopkeepers, bus-conductors, servants, teachers, any who serve us, or whom we serve? Are our contacts with them an expression of the law of love? Do we think highly of them, treat them as we should wish to be treated if we could change places? Do we consider their faults, weaknesses, rudeness, inattention to our interests as a sufficient reason for returning the same coin to them? Or have we actually so grasped the spirit of Christ that we are glad of every opportunity to return gold for the copper we receive, kindness for unkind criticism, gentle words for off-hand or discourteous ones and so forth?

Let us take one by one those whom we constantly meet. Let us be quite honest. Is our conduct towards them justified in the light of what we have been learning? How may we improve it so that if all others so acted we should indeed be living in a "new world"? If the method of progress towards this end is the method we have discussed in these pages, it is up to us to begin right here—otherwise we are either hypocrites or cowards, or both. There is no other place where we can begin to create a new social order if we fail here.

Second Day.

And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him. Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast. And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not *of it*. But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among *their* kinsfolk and acquaintance. And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him. And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers. And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them. And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man. (Luke ii. 40-52.)

The home is the place where each child first learns the lessons of life. Here we should discover the meaning of love in action. What are the qualities that make a family contented and serviceable to the community? Can our religion stand the test of the home circle, the small annoyances, the differences of taste and temperament, etc.? There are many who have great visions of world service and who fail sadly at home. In fact, the subconscious motive to go out as a missionary may be the failure to fit in at home. Are we seeking some big thing to do before we have learned the lesson of trying out love in the place where we are? Is our ambition to reach a wider sphere simply a cloak to prevent us from seeing that we have broken down in the smaller one?

Jesus at twelve is filled with this passion to serve men greatly. Already He sees that He must be about His Father's business. The longing to go forth and give the word must have burned in His soul with a fierce intensity on many a day when He toiled in the carpenter's shop and when He lived in a narrow home circle " subject to His parents."

Does not this, which is the largest part of the life of Jesus, carry a very significant message to us in this day of crises and opportunities ? The world cannot be won by rush methods. The call to go forth comes very insistently from many quarters. Those who respond should be those who have learned the secret of applying love in the family circle, and who can really say, " We have tried this method and know that it works in our own home life."

The problem of exacting obedience in the home might engage our thought. Is it right to demand obedience from children even if they do not see the rightness of a course ? What methods are justifiable in enforcing obedience in little children, in the adolescent period, etc. ? Do we deny children something of real value if we do not teach them to obey implicitly and promptly—remembering that our Father's will may not always be easy to understand, even though it is right and proper for us to obey it ? (See *The Christian Revolution*, chap. vi., " The Home "; and *The Practice of Christianity*.)

One of the chief ways in which love expresses itself is in an imagination touched by sympathy. In the home we have opportunity to use imagination in reference to all concerned—parents, brothers, sisters, servants it may be. When we are annoyed and perplexed by their behaviour do we seriously try to put ourselves in their position ? In speaking a harsh or cutting word, in giving a peremptory order, in finding fault, in indulging our own tastes when others are inconvenienced, do we seek to think our way into the mind and spirit of the other

party? Learning to do this, we become fitted for the task of bringing in the Kingdom of God. It is by these tests men can see whether the Kingdom has already come for us or not.

Third Day.

Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam *is* in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye: and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye. Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you. Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him? Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets. (Matt. vii. 1-12.)

The family problem is no easy one for many people, but after all it is a simple one compared with that which faces a man or woman who goes out into the world of affairs and tries therein to express the Golden Rule. We want to treat others in the right way—but again and again we find we are facing "the system" in one form or another. Men have created in the course of ages a social industrial, political international "order" in which it seems impossible to move freely. Our right instincts are checked by such considerations as the following: "It would be useless for one person to take isolated action when everyone is doing otherwise." "To treat

another in the spirit of Christ means that advantage will be taken of us." "It is not business to act in such a way." "My family is dependent upon me, and so to act would bring them ruin." To many people the system seems to be simply a cruel, heartless thing which not only crushes the bodies of men, but perverts their minds and poisons their souls. To live a life of constant compromise; to conduct a business which depends upon certain conventional dishonesties; to be, in political life, forever concerned with what is expedient rather than with what is right; to find professional etiquette barring the way to simple obedience to moral instincts—to live in any of these ways is to feel a perpetual burden on one's spirit unless one frankly gives up the struggle to do the obviously Christian thing.

Such considerations, and the knowledge of affairs that leads to them, give a sense of understanding sympathy towards all who are caught in the system. We cannot set ourselves up as mere critics. If we are not ourselves in such a plight we soon may be. Perhaps our own sin of condemnation of others, of superior righteousness, or of inward acceptance of some other kind of compromise is, after all, the beam as compared with the mote in the eyes of some who inwardly struggle against almost impossible odds, while outwardly they seem tamely to acquiesce.

In this spirit let us consider what we can actually do to meet the situation. Are we really bound to acquiesce in evil, even to be partners in evil, just because we are in an evil world? Are there many places in life where it is not only hard, but actually impossible to be a Christian?

There are two different meanings sometimes attached to the word "compromise." Can we distinguish between them and discover whether in both senses compromise is a necessary part of life? In the one sense we find ourselves unable to reach at once our full ideal and must take something less as a stage on the way. In the other

sense we actually agree to evil and take part in something which, from the nature of the case, is opposed to our ideal and cannot really be a stage towards its accomplishment. Is the politician bound to compromise in both senses? What about war, or a business where there is sweated labour, or a magistrate administering a law that involves sending people to prisons that can only confirm them in crime? It is such problems as these that really show where "the shoe pinches" (*Cf. Compromise*, by Morley.)

Fourth Day.

Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide *is* the gate, and broad *is* the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat. Because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither *can* a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. (Matt. vii. 13-23.)

We launched ourselves yesterday upon a tremendous problem. Christianity is not simply a theory, a philosophy, a creed to be accepted, or a Church to be joined. It is a way of life, and it involves the taking of a certain course in all kinds of difficult circumstances. To judge the tree by its fruits is a perfectly fair way of judging. Yet many people seem to be content with living in a world where there is much evil, with the spiritual comfort of

a faith that saves their own souls, but making no serious effort in business life (let us say) to reach a standard higher than that of the circle in which they move. It is not by the profession "Lord, Lord," but by the standard we actually live by that we are to be judged.

Now to live by this higher standard involves several things. In the first place, we must find what it really is. This is no simple matter in our complex modern life. It requires the very best thinking we can put into it. It requires common thought, for we cannot hope to see our way in great social issues if we think in isolation. It involves reading, for there are many very stubborn facts, economic, racial, etc., which we must know unless our acts are to be mere sentimentalism, which accomplishes nothing. It involves experiment, for there are many truths which can never be discovered in the study—only in the laboratory. And it involves failure—or at least the big possibility of failure—for again and again truth has been found by the method of trial and error, and a hundred or a thousand mistakes may be needed to lead us to the way—that straight and narrow one—which leads to true life for the community as well as for the individual.

And in all these efforts of thought, study, experiment, we need the childlike spirit, the teachable mind, the eagerness to know the will of God. Humility is a grace that leads not only to personal holiness, but also to social redemption.

Have we, in these suggestions, some clue as to the method by which any one of us can actually become creators of a better system. The system, after all, is what men have made it. Any new system must be the work of men. To think of it in abstract terms is likely to lead to despair or cynicism. There is a way of challenging it, by patient individual and group effort. This way we can discover and we can take. That surely was the message of Jesus, though He never led people to expect it would

be an easy or a popular way. The end of a system that denies human values, that encourages that hardness of heart which seems to many to be a virtue, that allows unlimited competition however cruel the results, that acts on an idea of racial superiority or class-war, that divides men in interest and in spirit by frontiers of nation or class or status—the end of such a system, however many are in it, is *destruction*. The end of a system built on love and goodwill and respect for others, a system that is a family rather than a mob, however few there be that find it, is *eternal life*. Is not this the ground of our hope in " this present evil world " ?

Fifth Day.

Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil, blind, and dumb: and he healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw. And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the Son of David ? But when the Pharisees heard *it*, they said, This *fellow* doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils. And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand: and if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand ? And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast *them* out ? therefore they shall be your judges. But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you. Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man ? and then he will spoil his house. (Matt. xii. 22-29.)

We have seen something of the kind of society that Christ thought about, and we have considered some aspects of His way of creating it. Nevertheless, again and again, in practice the thought comes back to us, Is it not actually impossible to avoid, on occasion, taking another way ? A young Chinese came back from studying abroad with the highest ideals. He was determined to purify the public life. For years he waited, unable to get any position without graft. At last he said, " I will

pay my way up as everyone else does, and when I reach the top I will carry out my ideals." He entered the public service, and years afterwards retired, a beaten and disillusioned man. High office had come to him, but it found him powerless to carry out his ideals and caring far less to do it. Is this typical of other experiences in business or professional life in other lands? Is there any essential reason why such a plan could not succeed?

Let us think of some of the actual difficulties we may have to face. A man in business awakens to the fact that his employees are getting an inadequate wage that is driving girls on to the streets to eke out their income. He knows that to raise the rate of wages means that his goods cannot be put on the market in competition with the goods made by others who have not his standards. What is he to do? To go out of business throws hundreds into unemployment. A worker finds that his trade-union regulation means deliberately doing less than his best for his employer. To cut out of the union is to lose his job and probably fail to get another. He has a wife and family absolutely dependent on the weekly wage. A merchant finds that everyone in his business is giving secret commissions. To stand out is to lose custom and probably bring to complete ruin the business he conducts which, in certain ways, is setting a standard distinctly above the average and doing a real public service. A shopkeeper finds that a certain class of goods is adulterated and sold as pure. They cannot be put on the market pure at the same price. His customers are not actually damaged by the adulteration, and would really rather have the goods cheaper, but if the adulteration is admitted he will lose their custom.

Such questions as these are not theoretical. It is in just such cases that the problem presses upon tens of thousands. We are all dependent upon a system that is in many respects a denial of the Christian ideal.

What Jesus saw so clearly was that you simply cannot,

from the nature of things, drive out evil by an alliance with evil. If our first aim is a human family, we must learn to think out what that means in just such circumstances as the above.

We might take one single problem such as war when used in a cause that is mainly right. Does the end in this case justify the means? What is the Christian alternative to war?

The next step in many cases is apt to seem a pure negation. But we have to think our way through the denial of the wrong to the way by which we may express the right. A very small and simple beginning is often indicated. Let us pass the day with this challenge in our minds.

Sixth Day.

Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no regard of your Father which is in heaven. Therefore when thou doest *thine* alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: that thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly. And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites *are:* for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen *do:* for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him. After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed by thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as *it is* in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the

glory, for ever. Amen. For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. (Matt. vi. 1-15.)

We come back to the question—where can we begin? Every system in history has been compacted of human relationships. What may be wrong with us is that we have allowed the system to get on top of us and into our very thinking. We can also begin in the sphere of human relationships, and through improving these sooner or later the system must be humanized.

It is a fatal error to think of persons merely as members of classes. To call a man a profiteer, a German, a hand, a Bolshevik, a nigger, or whatever it may be, is to classify him, or endow him with all the supposed characteristics of the class. Clutton Brock, writing in *Immortality*, says, in effect, that Heaven has room enough for the Germans, but not room for our ideas of the Germans. If we are to begin truly we must declassify the men we deal with, take them out of their places in the card-index system, and look them in the face as men. This leads to many truly revolutionary changes in thought and practice. Mere " welfare work " introduced to make the machine run better is of little avail and is open to the criticism that we are simply bolstering up an evil thing. But if we can really understand one another, find one another, put ourselves in another's place, there will no longer be the great gulf that so often makes negotiation hopeless from the outset. When we label men we regard all as guilty of the crimes against our own class or group which we nurse in our hearts as a justification for resentment. Perhaps that so-called crime is the perfectly natural reaction of a group that has been fed on lies or half-truths or irritated beyond measure by the thoughtless action of our " class." So by this individualizing method resentment gives place to understanding, and this leads to forgiveness. If we do not forgive the individual or the

group which seems to be sinning against us, what, according to to-day's passage, will be the result ? Can we afford, for our own sakes, to nourish resentment against another group ?

This individualizing process not only removes in us a barrier against the creation of a family, it opens our eyes to a world of new possibilities. In this heartless system other men, women and children besides ourselves and our class are caught up and carried whither they would not: we are, in fact, fellow-sufferers. Across the trenches men looked at one another often enough as those who had no personal quarrel, and could indeed have been very good friends. But they had to fight because they were under orders and each believed he was standing for something of value to humanity, or, if he had lost that faith, was at least powerless to express himself as an individual. We must get across the trenches in our social order and try together to work out a better system. It cannot be truly done by a group of capitalists imposing their idea of a better order or by a revolution in which the thinking of the worker alone expresses itself. We need to realize we are all victims together of something that has grown up we scarce know how, and therefore we must join in the effort to substitute something better. How may we be effectively joined in this effort ?

Seventh Day.

Wherefore remember, that ye *being* in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: but now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition *between us ;* having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, *so* making peace; and that he might

reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: and came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner *stone;* in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. (Eph. ii. 11-22.)

We have seen that a necessary principle in moving toward social reconstruction is that we find fellowship with those who are bound up with us in the present system and who seem to be on the other side of one of the many gulfs that separate men. For example, if the Franco-German situation is to be solved it should be by the joint efforts of persons of goodwill in those two nations. If a better system of industry is to be discovered in, let us say, the making of boots, it should be through the *joint* effort of the workers, employers, managers, and buyers of boots.

Let us look for a moment at the barriers which have to be removed by patient, imaginative love:

1. *Difference of Wealth.*—Is it not possible that many people who have inherited or are earning much money should voluntarily live much more simply, even sparsely, not only in order to use their money for better ends than personal comfort, but so as to remove the invisible barriers that come through different standards of living?

2. *Difference in Experience of Life.*—Those who always have had enough money, and have not been under the necessity of working with their hands, have so different an experience as to make co-operation with the hand workers very hard. Would it not be well if many sons of the employing or rentier classes were to take a few years in hand work, joining a trade union, etc., in order to have an actual experience of the life of those with whom they must work out a new order?

3. *Difference of Education.*—The home influence and the school make barriers unconsciously. Should more children from middle-class homes go through the Council schools (as in America and other countries)? Are not the W.E.A. and the Adult School movement, in this respect, making for a better common understanding? Have we any duty in regard to such organizations that would be a part of the general duty we are now considering of giving ourselves to the creation of a new social order? Are we reading the books on which socialists, trade unionists, and others are being nourished? Do we read labour papers?

4. *Difference of Language.*—The very words we use have different contents. It is quite impossible for people to co-operate until they have learned one another's language. Those who have had greater educational advantages should be the first to move in this matter. By attending meetings and by making friends across the barriers, we are all the time breaking down a provincialism that is often so deep that we are quite oblivious to it.

Paul saw that the work of Christ was to break all such barriers down. Those who have a living experience of Him find it wonderfully possible to get to one another across the barriers. The creation of "one new man" in Christ is a living experience for many to-day. This way of reconciliation leads to reconstruction. There is a pathway here open for all to tread. What actual steps have we taken along it?

GENERAL NOTES

This week we have tried to face our problem from a slightly different angle. Admitting that the finest ideal for human society is the family one which Jesus Christ set before men, and admitting that the way to reach this ideal is through individual and group initiative rather than by seeking to press others by violence or by majorities,

we have yet the great task of discovery before us. At what point can such persons or groups really touch the problem? The social and industrial system is strongly entrenched. There are huge vested interests with great financial and political power. There are State systems upheld by authority, by force and by custom. There are habits of mind which are peculiarly difficult to change, prejudices, hatreds, affections, inhibitions. We have to deal, above all, with inertia, which is one of our great social sins, and which is often the outward expression of a selfishness which recognizes that the individual concerned has much to lose and little to gain by any change.

"As for me," wrote William James, "my bed is made: I am against bigness and greatness in all their forms, and with the invisible molecular forces that work from individual to individual, stealing in through the crannies of the world like so many soft rootlets, or like the capillary oozing of water, and yet rending the hardest monuments of man's pride, if you give them time. The bigger the unit you deal with, the hollower, the more brutal, the more mendacious is the life displayed. So I am against all the big organizations as such, national ones first and foremost; against all big successes and big results; and in favour of the eternal forces of truth which always work in the individual and immediately unsuccessful way—under-dogs always, till history comes, after they are long dead, and puts them on top."

Is this a true conception of the real way in which the progress towards a true end for society actually works? If so, do we not need to pay far more attention than is usually done to the personal and unobserved forces, and do we not need to reconsider our own attitude and where we can put in our life to the best advantage if we are to count in the great task?

Taking this general position, at what point or points can we actually get to work on the job? Perhaps the best thing the group could do would be to concentrate on one

problem which all feel to be a vital one. It may be that there are a number of such problems or that each individual has been caused to think of a different one. By perfectly frank discussion of these questions in an atmosphere of common search for the will of God and readiness to do it, very definite progress can be made. Possibly the group would do well to meet more than once on this aspect of the subject, so that it can grow together and begin to function helpfully in regard to the solution of difficulties that come into the lives of each.

Is it possible that the group should together take some step which would amount to an experiment in Christian living ? Is it possible that if some one member is clearly called to take such a step the other members should agree to stand in with him and help him in carrying it through ?

The Christian Church began as a small company of friends who searched together for the way of Christ and made experiments fearlessly. They had a common experience and a common faith. They had confidence in one another and in the leadership of the Spirit. Some may feel the Church of to-day has not got these qualities. In a spiritual sense the Church is born again wherever a few persons meet in this spirit of worship, adventure and search. Might not a group which has passed through the experience of these studies together be just the kind of fellowship which the Church ought always to be ?

We want to avoid, at this point, any purely abstract discussion and concentrate on practical problems, testing our proposed solution by the principles we have been studying and especially asking ourselves whether the means we intend to use are or are not likely to be creative of family relations in the world.

Two dangers must be avoided in approaching the social problem in this way. First, we do not want to rush into activities without seeing where we are going or what

relation they have to the main purpose we have visualized in these days. As students, we should have a basis of thought and a knowledge of the facts to guide us. On the other hand, to wait indefinitely until we can see all the way is plain folly. Many questions are only solved as we begin to act in relation to them. Theoretically they seem insoluble. When we get to work on them it appears that at once one small action opens the way to another, and so further light dawns as we follow the light already given. The path of action is also the path of illumination.

Some of the particular problems referred to in the daily studies are summarized in the questions for discussion. There is wisdom in choosing one rather than in trying to crowd in all.

QUESTIONS TO BE FACED BY THE GROUP

1. Let us have a very frank interchange of view as to what the next step means in our individual life. Has our study revealed anything which comes home to us as a personal obligation ?

2. Can we see any new way of carrying out the ideals we have studied in our home circle ? Is there any place where we have manifestly failed ? Is our home the kind of circle which we should like to see enlarged and made typical of human society as a whole, and if not, what part have we in preventing it from being so ?

3. Are there " seeds of war " in our personal life ? What about class prejudice, race superiority, indifference to the needs of others ? Are there barriers between us and any of our fellows which we are taking no pains to remove, and if so, how can we set about removing them ? For example, would greater simplicity of living, association with others of a different type, etc., so act ?

4. Have we got into the habit of grouping or classi-

fying our fellows so that we hinder the development of friendly human relationships ?

5. What is compromise, and is it ever right ?

6. Is there any point where the group can help any individual or act together in regard to some particular problem of college or community life ? Should we meet again to discuss further these and kindred problems ?

TENTH WEEK

THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF YOUTH

First Day.

The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem, is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth. The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am *he*. (John iv. 19-26.).

The programme of Jesus has made a very strong appeal to young men and women in every age. It was largely young people whom He rallied to His cause when He was alive. The young man Paul was one of the most brilliant of His followers who devoted all his youthful energies and talents to the cause. In this week we shall consider what it is in the social programme of Jesus that appeals especially to the young and active in mind and body.

The passion for ultimate truth, the desire to know what things really are, the unwillingness to be satisfied with shams—these are characteristic of youth. Much of the criticism of tradition, and, in particular, of traditional religion to-day, comes from this angle. There is a feeling that older people are concerned in keeping up superstitious beliefs that support the old order and give such persons the position they hold.

Now Jesus was manifestly concerned with reality. This woman wanted to know the deeper meaning that lay behind a tradition. Jesus went to the heart of the matter. It was no good to worship God merely as a form: it was no good to worship an unknown God. What the Father wants is truth and a spirit that touches His spirit. As one person meets another in friendship and confidence and finds the real man behind words and acts, so Jesus believed we might find God. No social programme is to be built on a mere fancy of the mind. If God be a reality—then the social programme of Jesus follows. If He be not a reality, there is no good talking of social progress at all. Jesus was determined to bring men face to face with reality and make them discover for themselves the truth which meant so much to Him.

Does this approach to life appeal to us to-day? Is there any hope of social advance if it depends on a superstitition which wise people think is good for ignorant ones still to believe? Keeping up a pretence for the sake of social stability is to live in a fool's paradise. Sooner or later truth will out and break it up.

Second Day.

Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples; and looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God! And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou? He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour. One of the two which heard John *speak*, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone. The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth

Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me. Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see. (John i. 35-46.)

This story of how these young men gathered round Jesus is a very interesting one. They had prejudices (see especially the answer of Nathanael). They had to leave their occupations. It was no small thing to go with this unknown man. But there must have been something very winning in His way with men. He overcame their prejudices. He welcomed the fullest enquiry. He shared everything with them. They even had a common purse. He trusted them with responsible work. Can we not, even at this distance, feel something of the attractiveness of this simple company, with their happy fellowship, their common quest for truth, their abandonment of everything as they gathered round their incomparable leader?

Again and again such groups have come together in a similar way, believing that Jesus was still among them by His Spirit. He said, "Lo, I am with you alway," and "Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst." It may be hard to believe how this can be; but many groups since that day have so believed, and these have been groups which have counted in making the world better. Again and again it has been out of such a fellowship that a new idea has come which has revolutionized society.

Is there anything in this story that makes an appeal to youth? Young people tend to herd together—they begin to feel the need of intercourse, of sharing their lives and their deepest ideals. It was into such a fellowship that Jesus called His friends, and it must have been a very significant and powerful one if we can judge by the results, for it withstood the terrible shock of His death, and it started a movement which survived the fiercest

persecutions, the bitterest opposition, much internal weakness and dissension, and still to-day it goes on with ever new streams of power for challenging the old order and creating the new.

Third Day.

And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast: the same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus. Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus. And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will *my* Father honour. Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, *saying*, I have both glorified *it*, and will glorify *it* again. (John xii. 20-28.)

In this passage we get a remarkable insight into the thought of Jesus. In the Greeks He seems to see the promise of the fulfilment of His dreams of a great world family overstepping the bounds of race and place. His soul breaks out into a joyful cry: Now he is glorified, his reward is coming. Then the shadow falls across the lovely landscape. He realizes that death itself is the price to be paid for winning the world. He faces what it means. Shall He withdraw and ask to be saved from the pain? No, He must go forward to suffer—for without this there can be no fulfilment of His dearest hopes.

A world Kingdom—a world service—how the very thought stirs the heart of youth, sick and tired as we all are with strife in a world which seems to be run by old men. Here is an ideal that calls out all our best, seen long ago by a young man of a little over thirty years of age.

Such dreams as He dreamt are infectious. There can be no doubt that He appealed to the youth of His time because of His daring vision of the future, because He would not talk in terms of anything less than a world redeemed and made one.

But what of the cost? Is that not also a part of the appeal? There is an infinite capacity in men to suffer and endure for a cause that holds their imagination and enlists their manhood. It was to just such a cause as this that Jesus won men. It is folly to try to win young men and women by telling them the task is easy and it will not make any demands upon them. The very difficulties are the attraction. There is something here worthy of all we have to give. It will take our utmost effort, we shall be exhausted, lonely, perplexed. But the difficulties are there to be overcome; they await our youth and enthusiasm—nothing is worth doing that doesn't cost. Youth will always respond to a call like this. (See *Lay Religion*, H. T. Hodgkin, especially chap. iv., "The Demand for Adventure.")

Fourth Day.

And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain *man* said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air *have* nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay *his* head. And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God. And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell which are at home at my house. And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God. (Luke ix. 57-62.)

By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. (Heb. xi. 8.)

It is not only the difficulties. There is something else in the call of Jesus which at first sight might seem to

repel rather than attract. It is the uncertainty of the result. No doubt in the deepest sense we can say the result is assured—good must triumph over ill—unless the whole universe is a huge nightmare. But in the immediate task there is an element of uncertainty: who knows what is going to come of the step we take? We seem to be asked to go out, like Abraham, to a new country, "not knowing whither we go." Can we be sure this new social order will work? May it not be that the experiment into which we put money, effort, life itself, will fail? Is there any guarantee that the people to whom we appeal will respond? Perhaps they will be like Judas. Perhaps when we have done our level best we shall have to confess that we have, through ignorance, made a fatal mistake. Is it not safer to stay in the old country?

These are the arguments that appeal to the middle-aged and old. To the young there is always a perfectly fascinating appeal in the very uncertainty. Some might call it the gambler's chance! But that would only suggest that there is something in all of us to which gambling appeals. The question is how to use this something for a worthy end instead of for a selfish and ignoble one. This is where the genius of Jesus comes in. He did appeal to this something in men. Faith was His substitute for gambling. Faith is not to go contrary to reason, but it is to stake everything on something which lies beyond absolute proof. To these men who came to Him, He threw down a challenge. Leave all these things you know and love—leave them altogether for the unknown life—we cannot guarantee the result. But when these young men met Jesus did not some of them feel that with him they would dare to make the venture? Do we feel that?

Fifth Day.

I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth

the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and know my *sheep*, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, *and* one shepherd. Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father. (John x. 11-18.)

Yesterday we closed on the thought of the great adventure to which Jesus called men. The secret of His power to win them was that He Himself led the way. There is no danger which He asks others to face that He did not face Himself. He not only called men, as did Nietzsche, to "live dangerously." He showed them what it meant in His own life. Surrounded by suspicious foes, He went steadily on with His work. As they became more threatening He did not hide Himself, but came boldly among them and continued to expose their shams and self-seeking. In this sense it was historically true that He laid down His life. It is quite clear that He could have escaped the Cross—but He saw a goal before Him which could not be reached by running away from danger. He never flinched, but went right on.

All the time He was winning to Himself the increased loyalty and support of these young men. It was devotion to the person of their leader which made so strong an appeal and held them together through many trials. Young people all over the world are ready to respond to a leader who is fearless and affectionate, with clear vision and magnetic personality. Such was Jesus. He enlisted the young men, for He was one of themselves; He knew their temptations and their hopes; He felt with them in their sense of wrong and their passion for freedom; He flung himself into the thick of the fight.

Jesus offers Himself still as the leader of the youth of the world. His character stands revealed to us in the old story. His spirit still stirs men to action. His standards still challenge men to arise and quit themselves like men. His way still stretches before us, difficult, dangerous, uncertain as it may appear—the way of the Cross—but the way He Himself took, leading to the conquest of evil by good, to the creation of a new world by love.

Sixth Day.

But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become *as* sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have *the gift of* prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed *the poor*, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. Charity suffereth long, *and* is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth: but whether *there be* prophecies, they shall fail; whether *there be* tongues, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these *is* charity. (1 Cor. xiii.)

This great song may be the marching song of our new campaign. It marks out the path that Jesus trod. It breathes the spirit of triumph and hope. It shows the futility of all other ways. Does it not awaken a response

in the heart of youth? Must it not appeal with great force to every man of passion and of patriotism?

Mencius wrote, "Love conquers that which is not love, just as water subdues fire. Those, however, who nowadays practise love, do it as if with one cup of water they could save a whole wagon-load of fuel which was on fire. This conduct, moreover, greatly encourages those who are not loving."

There is a way to overcome that which is not loving in the social order. Wherever man exploits man, wherever wealth cuts man off from his neighbour, wherever woman is used for man's lust, wherever children are used as a means of getting wealth, wherever men despise those of another race, wherever criminals are treated as of no worth, wherever men preach hatred against another nation —love is trampled under foot. We see the vast fields of human activity where the fair flowers of love do not bloom freely, we see where the poisonous fumes of factories wither their tender buds. We see where the weeds of jealousy and scorn and pride choke the young shoots. We see where the rocks of harshness and cruelty prevent the roots from finding nourishment.

The young men and women of all nations have a task so great as to stagger us, but so splendid as to uplift us. It is to plant this seed of love in all hearts, to water it with our tears, to tend it with our hands till they bleed, to lay down our own lives rather than see it perish. Wherever love blooms there is the beginning of a new social order. "Love never faileth." Does not this task appeal to all the best in us?

Seventh Day.

At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the

Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and *he* to whomsoever the Son will reveal *him*. Come unto me, all *ye* that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light. (Matt. xi. 25-30.)

We have tried in these ten weeks to see what Jesus really thought about the world, what was His hope for it, in what way He believed that hope could be realized, the kind of men He gathered round Him and the way in which they began, alone and in groups, to carry forward His great work of bringing in the Kingdom of God.

To-day we review our work. What have we learned? Is this word of Jesus true? Does it appeal to us as having a meaning for to-day? Is there any other standard we can put in the place of His? Is there any other way we feel would be more hopeful, whether judged by a philosophical standard (the relation of means to end) or by the actual results in human history? Is it time that men all over the world rediscovered and used again the way of Jesus? Will it make an appeal to the youth of the world if they once can understand it and get rid of the prejudices and half-truths which cluster round the religion of Jesus?

These are some of the questions we must try to answer. We need the child-spirit if we are to answer them rightly. We need readiness to learn, a trustful simplicity, an eager expectation. Perhaps to some of us there may come at the end of this course a very direct appeal, as it were from Christ Himself, as He made it long ago in Galilee. Perhaps we are beginning to see that to serve our fellow-men or our country greatly we must serve Christ. Perhaps we are wondering whether ever man spoke as this man—recognizing His wisdom, His sincerity, His devotion, His power over our own lives to call out our best and to awaken hopes and resolutions we had never thought of before. If so, what shall we do?

GENERAL NOTES

We have now reached the close of these studies, and we ought to review the whole material and ask ourselves again the questions with which we started. It was hoped at the beginning that we might gain light upon the standard of Jesus for society, upon the effect that the acceptance of this standard would have upon our estimate of the present social order and upon our plan for securing a better one. We hoped to be in a position to answer the question, "Is Jesus the leader whom the world needs to-day?"

This question is closely related to another one: "Is Jesus the Leader whom I can follow and to whom I can give my entire confidence and devotion?" It is, we have seen, through the individual that Jesus seeks to change society. Undoubtedly the system needs to be changed. Evils have crept into our social order which, especially in the rapid changes following modern industrialism, we can see clearly to be opposed to the highest ideals of human welfare. These evils find their starting-point in the lives of ordinary men and women. We cannot blame them upon a system. It is therefore clear that if there is to be any reality at all in our social programmes, we must face the question as to whether we are prepared to live the kind of life that, if all others lived it, would result in a change in the system—in a new and better world. That seems to be the crux of the matter in the thought of Jesus. Other reformers are prepared to enlist men and women who will work for a change in conditions with whatever motive and in whatever way. Jesus seeks only to enlist those who begin with the change in themselves, who are pledged to work for changed conditions in ways that are personal, educative, and persuasive, rather than by violence or by compromise. The kind of person Jesus wants is the daring man who will begin by living in a world so far from ideal as though

it were already the world of his hopes. He will not wait till everyone else is ready to move with him. He will be a pioneer of the new social order.

The question, then, which first confronts us is, "Are we ready to take this leap in the dark? Dare we follow Christ?" We have no excuse for deceiving ourselves as to the nature of the enterprise. At the same time we have a Leader who went first, one who promises us the power to live up to what we see to be right, who said He would Himself stand by us in the struggle. It is not possible to close our study without facing this personal side of the question.

To the group there remains the wider and more general questions. Is the standard and the way of Jesus good? Do we know any better? Will it appeal to the young men and women we know? How can it be made to appeal to them? To review the records of each week's work will help us to see the progress of thought throughout our study. We may find some records that need to be altered. We may find some points that need much further discussion, as, for example, the relation of Jesus to the problem of private ownership, the question of war and Christianity, the problem of the making of a better industrial order and many others. But there ought to be material out of which we may find answers to these questions. It would be well for the group to consider before it breaks up whether it has found such a close fellowship in this search after truth as to make it wish to continue in facing these other unsettled questions, and whether it has any specific duty towards the school, college, or neighbourhood in view of the light which has come in this joint study.

There are many aspects of the teaching and the work of Christ which have not been fully or at all dealt with here. This course has deliberately confined itself to a special problem. It is the writer's hope that it may have shown how very full of interest and modern meaning

the New Testament is, and given a zest for further study of its teaching on other aspects of life. There are many who have taken their ideas from Christianity in one form or another, but who disown Christ. We need not blame them, for often they do not even know the source of their ideas, and often they have been prejudiced against Christ by the action of persons or communities that have the name of Christian without fully showing His spirit. But undoubtedly they lose a great deal. They do not know what it is to go back again and again to the original source and get fresh inspiration and new interpretations of life. Nor do they know what many who follow Christ can witness to—His actual power and presence to keep them true to their ideals, to strengthen them to meet temptation and opposition, to give them an abounding sense of hope in the midst of the most discouraging circumstances. That each one who studies this course may know something of this experience—the most wonderful thing life holds for man on earth—is the closing prayer of the writer.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. A brief review of the whole course, and in particular of any records made, will be a valuable prelude to making the best use of this closing period.

2. Is the standard of Jesus, as we now see it, what the world needs? If not, in what respect is it deficient? Can we see any better standard?

3. The members of the group might very simply exchange their ideas as to what this whole study has meant for them—how it has affected their thinking and how it will affect their lives.

4. What in the programme and call of Jesus appeals to youth? How can that appeal be made by us to-day?

5. In what sense is the way of Jesus revolutionary? Do we believe that there is still in the teaching of Jesus a strong enough principle of truth and enough life to

change the face of the earth if we should take Him seriously ?

6. The group should not disperse till it has faced the question as to whether it wishes to continue its work either (*a*) in facing some unsolved questions or (*b*) in undertaking some special service.

APPENDIX

THE REPORT OF THE "FORUM" ON SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL PROBLEMS AT THE PEKING CONFERENCE OF THE WORLD'S STUDENT CHRISTIAN FEDERATION, APRIL, 1922.

THE following statement embodies the findings of the "Forum" on social and industrial questions. Hurriedly prepared they cannot be taken as a final statement of the position of the group, but they do express a large degree of agreement among an *international body of Christians*, and as such may be a contribution to building up an international Christian position on these matters. The "Forum" hopes that thevarious Movements may consider them in detail and see what are the particular applications to which students in the several countries should be asked to give themselves.

What Jesus Christ Means for the Life of To-day.

The life of Jesus was utterly dedicated to the creation of a new order (the Kingdom of God), in which the family relationship, under God our Father, would be worked out in every department of life. This new order was to come through the creative activity of loving men and women, in harmony with one another and in conscious dependence upon God.

Jesus stated His programme thus:

To preach the Gospel to the poor.
To proclaim release for captives and recovery of sight for the blind.
To set free the oppressed.

In seeking to work out this programme we may note that—

(1) Jesus was supremely concerned with persons, far more than with things or even with reforms. He thought it worth while to make children happy, to talk to an alien woman, to spend time with ignorant fishermen, to help social outcasts. None were too poor or insignificant for His personal interest and help.

Therefore:

We are to be interested in each one and study his needs as a person whom we must respect and never despise.

We cannot be satisfied as long as any are neglected or oppressed.

We must strive for education that will develop personality.

We must seek to secure leisure for all to develop their minds and souls.

As industry is organized increasingly, especially in the Far East, we must prevent labour from becoming an intolerable burden to the workers.

For the criminals, beggars, defectives, we must provide conditions that give them possibilities of becoming useful members of the community.

In such ways we may express social justice based on recognition of human worth.

(2) Jesus behaved toward all as if they were already His brothers, and was never held back by distinctions of race, class and sex. The Jews hated the Samaritans, but Jesus healed and helped them; He mixed with rulers and peasants, He gave new hope to the fallen woman because He believed in her.

Therefore:

We must bring to an end all that keeps men apart.

We must stand for the highest ideal of woman, her freedom and her equality with man.

We must form a world family where race prejudice has no place.

Those of us whose economic advantage gives us power over the lives of others must be ready to surrender such advantage for the sake of closer fellowship.

We must see that the great chasm separating employer from employed in the more industrialized countries is not allowed to develop in the less forward.

We cannot be finally satisfied with such a division in society, and must seek to bring all who work in any industry together in some form of joint ownership and control of the property they use for their service to the community.

Thus we may help all to be masters of their own lives and also servants of the community working together.

Such are steps toward true universal brotherhood expressed in co-operation.

(3) Jesus spent a great deal of time in practical service for the community, and in helping individuals who sought His assistance. He spent a large part of His life in the carpenter's shop; He healed many who were diseased; He fed the hungry.

Therefore:

Our lives must be lives of service.

We must give our best, not to gain wealth, but to serve our fellows, whether by economic production, teaching, healing, or in any other way.

We must seek for such social changes that production may be for service, not for profit, and men shall be released from the toil of making superfluities.

We must recognize the health of men's bodies as a matter of real concern, seeking to create a public conscience in sanitation and other preventive measures.

These are examples of social responsibility expressed in service.

(4) Jesus, for the sake of this ideal, lived a life of love toward all men, and because He would not abandon that way in a world like this, He went bravely to death with His eyes open, despising the shame. He went on trusting the disciple who was defrauding Him and would, He knew, betray Him; He forgave His murderers and did not retaliate; He never tried to escape the consequences of acts of His love, although they were leading Him direct to the Cross.

Therefore:

We must accept the risk of loving men always in a world by no means ready for such action.

We must be prepared to be imposed upon, misunderstood and reviled without losing heart, and let our love increase to overcome the evil.

If, for example, the business in which we earn our living is immoral, we must change it at whatever cost, even if it should mean bankruptcy. If we are in an office where corruption is a part of the routine, we must take the consequences of uncompromising opposition, even if we lose our post.

If any of us see the way of Jesus to be utterly contrary to all war, he must spare no strength to root war out of international life and may have to refuse himself to take part in it, even if he is shot for his refusal.

We must make it our aim to embody the spirit of Christ in all social activities, even if it seem quixotic or futile.

These are examples of creative love in action.

Such are some of the principles of the new social order. They are tremendously revolutionary—far more so than Bolshevism. This Christian revolution proceeds through reconciliation. It is a great adventure. It means living dangerously. It needs men and women utterly con-

vinced that God is like what we see in Jesus, absolutely, and who are prepared to trust Him without reserve. It can achieve what we all most deeply desire in our best moments.

The very statement of these principles convicts us, who state them, of our own share in this imperfect society both actively and as we have consented to evil by our silence. But it also commits us to an unrelenting warfare against social ills and the purifying of our own lives in order that we may take our place in creating a world family.

Our idea of the Christian Church includes the belief that it is meant to be an instrument in bringing about this Christian revolution, and in helping all its members to join therein. We wish to give ourselves to following Jesus in thus serving our fellows.

BOOKS SUGGESTED FOR FURTHER READING

Property. By various authors, edited by Bp. Gore.

Competition. By William Temple and others.

Christian Justice. Norman Robinson.

The Christian Ideal. W. E. Wilson.

The Acquisitive Society. R. H. Tawney.

Christianity and the Social Crisis. Rauschenbusch.

Christianising the Social Order. Rauschenbusch.

The Practice of Christianity. Miss Dougall.

The Christian Revolution. H. T. Hodgkin.

Lay Religion. H. T. Hodgkin.

Christ and Caesar. Micklem and Morgan.

The Way to Personality. G. B. Robson.

The Arm of God. Roderic and Erica Dunkerley.

The Challenge of the Present Crisis. Fosdick.

The Untried Door. Richard Roberts.

What is the Kingdom of Heaven? Clutton Brock.

Principles of Social Reconstruction. B. Russell.

The Way Forward for the Churches. Clarke.

Non-Violent Coercion. Cave.

The New State. Follett.

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